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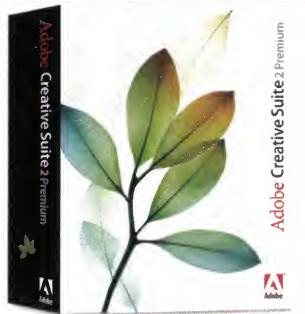
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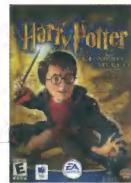
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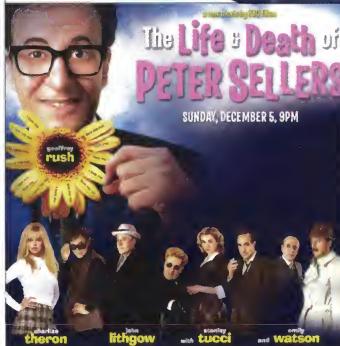
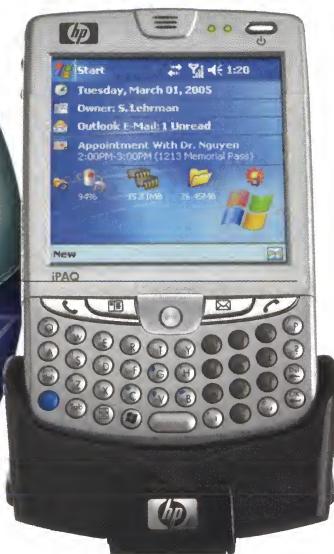
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<sup>\*\*</sup>Does not apply to education purchases.

next byte



## My Shoe Box



Redeem Gift Certificate

## Focus.

032

## Spinning a better web

**By Dan Frakes, Joe Kissell, Rob Griffiths, Dori Smith and David Sawyer McFarland**

Expert tips for getting the most out of Safari and Firefox, building better blogs and creating professional-looking web pages

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### Music.

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Sibelius 4, at a glance

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## Howto.

### Kid-proof your Mac

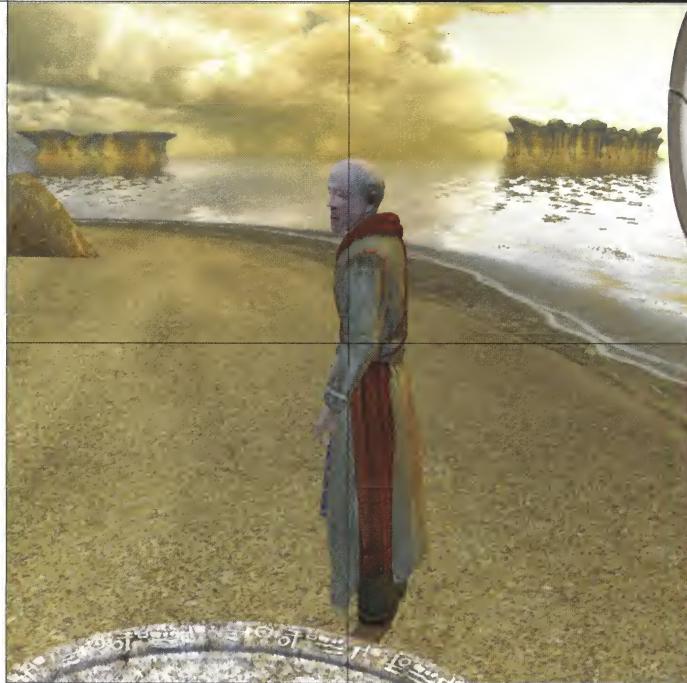
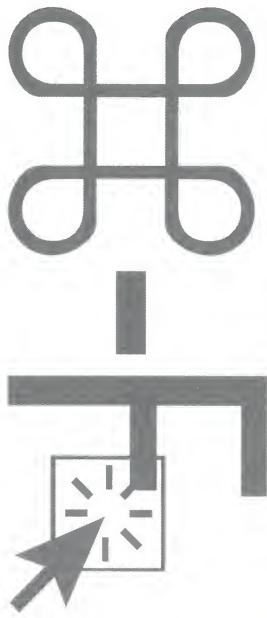
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Surf between the flags

### Design like the professionals

**070**  
Newsletter first-aid

### Help folder.

Sean McNamara is on leave



One more thing...

## Buzz.

### One more thing ...

021

Apple looked like a major player in October, posting its biggest quarterly revenue and profits — ever — while an intriguing invitation to the press kept analysts and observers on the edge of their seats for weeks, guessing what new revolutionary product was about to be unleashed. What was it? You'll have to read Buzz to find out.

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### Camino 0.8.4



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Firefox and OmniWeb help you navigate better

### FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced



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The end of an era

### Brother QL-550



### Dymo LabelWriter 400 Turbo



### Seiko Smart Label Printer 430



### Label printers

082

Mini printers for specialised tasks

### Toast 7 Titanium



084

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From the Macintosh scene to the magazine.

By Matthew JC. Powell.

**Hot Links**

[www.niche.com.au/mw](http://www.niche.com.au/mw)  
Read my first look at the iPod video

## Video in store

**Q**UICK quiz: what's the shortest-lived product in Apple's history? Not counting things that didn't actually get released, I'm thinking iTunes 5 has to be a strong contender for the crown. 35 days from release to replacement by iTunes 6 has to be some kind of record. For one brief, shining moment, all the iApps had the same version number (Garageband doesn't count because it's not got an i in it). Then in just over a month, we're out of sync again.

If anyone can beat it, matthew.powell@niche.com.au is the address to tell me on.

The big question one must ask is, why did iTunes 5 exist at all? Or, more accurately, why not just hang on to it for a few weeks and then call the version we now know as 6 version 5? Who'd have known?

iTunes 5 added a new interface, new search tools and new video capabilities, as well as support for the iPod nano, which was released at roughly the same time. iTunes 6 adds more video capabilities. There's a couple of other bits and pieces to do with the iTunes Music Store, but let's not dwell.

Actually, I'm going to dwell. The gift facility built into iTunes 6 means that people who live in countries that have access to the Music Store (ie the major markets like Liechtenstein, just not tinpot backwaters like Australia) can send actual content to anyone with an e-mail address, anywhere in the world. Previously, all they could do was buy gift certificates and set up allowances, and the recipient had to live in an iTunes-capable country in order to use them. This development could lead to greater ties of friendship and co-operation between Australians and their American pen-pals, methinks.

On the downside, video complicates things for an Australian iTMS. In the US, for example, users will be able to download episodes of *Lost* and *Desperate Housewives* the day after they are broadcast on the American Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) network, which produces both shows. It's effectively an official endorsement of time-shifting – don't worry about watching it in its regular timeslot, just wait a day and watch it whenever and wherever you want, without ads. Nifty system, and I'll be interested to see what it does to advertising revenue and the syndication value of the shows, to say nothing of later DVD sales.

Whether \$US1.99 is cheap enough to dissuade people downloading the shows via peer-to-peer networks such as BitTorrent is another interesting question, for which a clear answer will

be hard to obtain. Personally I'd happily pay a few bucks for a quick, reliable, high-quality download that didn't require all the searching and futzing and waiting that BitTorrent requires, but then I don't do a lot of that stuff anyway (really). Your mileage may vary.

Anyway, out here not all of the American ABC's shows are shown on the one network, so making a deal with the US studio helps not a jot in satisfying the local networks that hold rights. See above concerns re: ad revenue. It's not an insurmountable problem, but given the glacial progress towards a deal on music I'm less than optimistic.

Of course, the local iTunes Music Store could launch with only locally-made TV in its video selections. I'd like that: a clear way to gauge how much people value local productions. It's one thing to leave the box going with *Blue Heelers* just because there's nothing better on, but would you pay money per episode? If successful it might just persuade the powers that be to invest in local drama again. Maybe a deal with our very own ABC could be in the offing?

Then again, the Store might launch with episode after episode of *My DIY Backyard Renovation Auction Blitz Rules*, or the "too hot for TV" bits of *Australian Idle*. Shudder.

Of course, even such fantastic content will be for naught if the viewing experience isn't as it should be. Not long ago, Steve Jobs said he didn't think people wanted to watch video on an iPod-sized screen. Even as recently as the Apple Expo in Paris (a mere month ago) he was downplaying the likelihood of a portable video player being successful. The video iPod doesn't have a bigger screen or longer-lasting batteries or any other enhancements that might make it more suitable as a video player. All that's changed is Steve Jobs's mind – an unusual thing in and of itself.

All of this is, of course, somewhat in the abstract because I haven't yet seen a video iPod up close. That will happen within days of writing this, but well after we go to press, so I suggest you have a look at our nascent web site (such as it is – see "Hot links") where I will post my first impressions of the device by the time this reaches the stands.

## Fine tuning 1

I hope Mailbox is right about the imminent opening of the Australian iTunes Music Store and it's not just another red herring! If not it may be time for us "second class" Mac users to stage a little iProtest and refuse to purchase the next OS upgrade until we get all the features we are paying for. Better yet, a boycott of Sony and Warner products until they get themselves out of the dark ages and realise the future for them is also digital. While they may lose the odd album sale, if the price is right I'd wager the majority of people will take the convenience of an on-line store and do the right thing by purchasing the songs they want rather than break copyright. I am one of the very small minority that refuses to succumb to the temptation of "borrowing" songs from others, but I certainly no longer buy albums for one or two songs — maybe that's just an age thing! It would be nice to have a few songs in my collection that weren't from the '80s or '90s (sad but true).

**Craig Saward**  
via internet

## Fine tuning 2

I write in response to Don Hayes' letter about Mac-friendly legitimate mp3 sites accessible to Australians. There ain't many, but, if independent music is your thing emusic (see "Hot links") is a great site.

They provide a wide range of music signed to independent music labels. It is subscriber based, starting at \$US10 per month — that gets you 40 downloads. You can cancel at any time. A bargain in anyone's language.

I've been a subscriber for almost a year and it's great value. They've also got an expanding range of Aussie acts. I won't be holding my breath waiting for an Australian iTunes store.

**Tony Jones**  
Pagewood NSW

## Don't tread on me

I'm not sure I see the point of Alex Rieneck's Soapbox in the October issue of AMW. It exposes his icon issues (fair enough) but turns into a gratuitous and unwarranted bashing of the military. I laud the right to free speech — Mr Rieneck can hold whatever opinion he wants — but I can't see the point of this article. Why use this forum simply for a slanging session?

I found it personally offensive. I am an ex-serviceman who is also a long-time Mac user and am now a lecturer in graphic design and multimedia. I am responsible for retaining Macs at my educational institution against the PC-ifying forces of Central IT. Mr Rieneck might not like me, but Apple sure does!

Mr Rieneck also asserts that there is "a definite connection

between wanting to kill people, and Windows". While I would freely agree that using Windows might result in homicidal tendencies (it does with me), who does he think is buying Call of Duty, Medal of Honour, Unreal Tournament, Halo or Doom? These all sell well on the Mac platform, too. I can see all my copies from here.

While it is also true that some aspects of the institutionalised military are pretty down on initiative, it is generally people who think different who win when push comes to shove. Alexander against the Persians, ULTRA and other instances come to mind. Out-thinking is always better than out-fighting.

If Mr Rieneck thinks the military deserves Windows, ask yourself this: Do you want a half-a-billion dollar warship that "blue-screens"?

I know there is a fine line between "thought provoking" and "offensive", but I think we crossed it here. If Mr Rieneck was making a point, I must have missed it. Maybe I can't "think different" enough.

**Harry M Leith**  
Bayswater WA

*Just as a wide range of viewpoints are held by Mac users, so too AMW's writers. If ever Alex (or any of the team) makes your blood boil, we always welcome hearing the other side of the story here in Mailbox. — M.J.C.P.*



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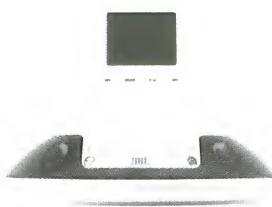
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Each issue Conexus (02 9975 2799) gives a JBL OnStage to the Australian Macworld reader who sends in the most interesting or provocative letter.

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## Hot Links

[www.privacy.gov.au](http://www.privacy.gov.au)

Learn about the Federal Privacy Act

[www.emusic.com](http://www.emusic.com)

Download MP3s until the Store comes home

## Do not disturb

A recent experience highlights a privacy issue for all computer users. I had a hard drive die on me (a more common experience than I would have thought). It was under warranty, and the dealer and distributor were quite happy to replace it. What became an issue was my concern over the contents of the defunct disk.

Consider what data is on your hard drive: passwords, financial information, most of your ID details, e-mails, etc. Not information you would want available to others. If the platter of the defunct hard drive could be accessed, all this data may have been vulnerable. Yet both the dealer and distributor had to be convinced that there was a problem with them keeping my old disk. Eventually, we compromised, with them giving me back the platter of the hard drive, which was the only bit of concern to me.

There is privacy legislation now available to us that appears to cover this situation. I believe that we as IT users need to be more ready to access those provisions.

Peter Mitchell  
Kings Park, SA

Letters should be e-mailed to [matthew.powell@niche.com.au](mailto:matthew.powell@niche.com.au) with a subject header of "Mailbox" or by post to Australian Macworld Mailbox, 3/165 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, Victoria 3182. Letters of fewer than 200 words are given preference. We reserve the right to edit letters and probably will. To be eligible for the OnStage prize, you must include your full name and address, including state or territory.

*You make a good and important point, Peter. However, the legal position isn't as clear-cut as you seem to think. If you look on the government's privacy web site (see "Hot links") you'll see that, for example, small businesses like most computer repair shops are not even covered by the Act. Of course, there may be state-based legislation that does cover such stores, but that would obviously differ around the country.*

*We'll do a follow-up on this in a future issue. — M.J.C.P.*

## Ease the squeeze

I find it frustrating the attitude that some software makers have to supporting their product. Most users, I think, simply want their applications to be stable and do the job the software was designed for. Yet some software companies, because of their business model, continue to bloat their software with new features that most users never use. Some, I suspect, do this so that they can charge huge sums for what otherwise should have been a maintenance update. Software bells and whistles may entice you to buy the program in the first instance, but it is a stable program together with good

customer support that will keep you as a loyal user.

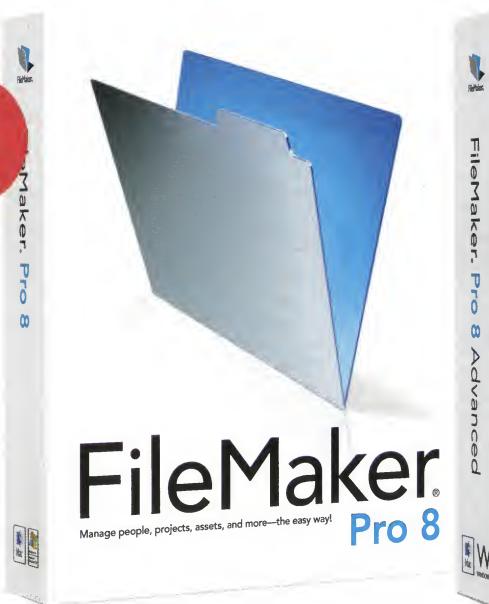
Quark says it is still testing QuarkXPress compatibility with OS 10.4. From my experience the program is not at all stable under Tiger. Postings to the Quark forums web site, however, raise concerns that Quark may not release a maintenance update for the program, but instead wait until the release of Quark 7 sometime next year. If this is the case I suspect more users will be making the switch to InDesign.

Gary Collins  
Sydney NSW

*I asked Quark about this, Gary, and was told that QuarkXPress 6.x is fully supported under Tiger, and if customers have stability problems the support staff will work with them — even escalating the query back to Quark's developers — to resolve the issues. It's impossible to test a product with every conceivable combination of hardware, software and peripherals, so I agree with you that good after-sales support is essential.*

*As for a Tiger-specific update to QuarkXPress 6.x, I have no news for you. That is not to say it won't happen, just that the company hasn't announced anything. — M.J.C.P.*

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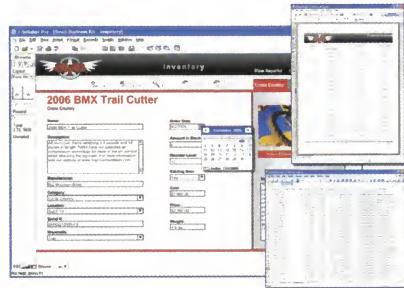
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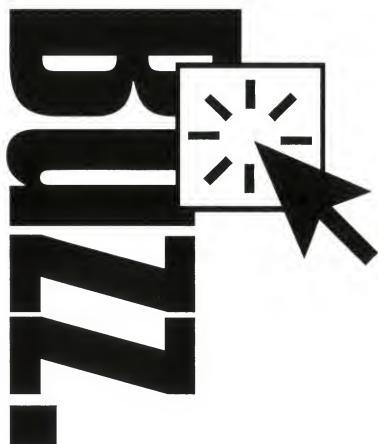
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### Hot Links

[www.apple.com/au](http://www.apple.com/au)  
iPods and iMacs and iTunes, oh my

## Three more things

JUST over a month after rolling out the super-slim iPod nano, Apple unveiled two new video iPods at a special media-only event in San Jose, California. Apple sold more than one million iPod nanos in the 17 days following its introduction in September, according to CEO Steve Jobs. "We could not meet demand," he told attendees of the special event.

"What about the white iPod?" he asked. "It's been a huge success, and therefore it's time to replace it. Today we are announcing the new white iPod, and it's a stunner. And yes, it does video."

**Video iPod.** The long-rumored and highly anticipated new iPods play video on a 2.5-inch, 320x240, 260,000 colour TFT display. The new iPod features realtime decoding of MPEG 4 and H.264 video at 30 frames per second (FPS). The video iPods come in two configurations: a 30GB model with a \$449 price tag, and a 60GB for \$598. The new iPod holds up to 15,000 songs, 25,000 photos or over 150 hours of video and is available in either white or black designs. Users can connect the new iPods to a television via the Apple iPod AV cable.

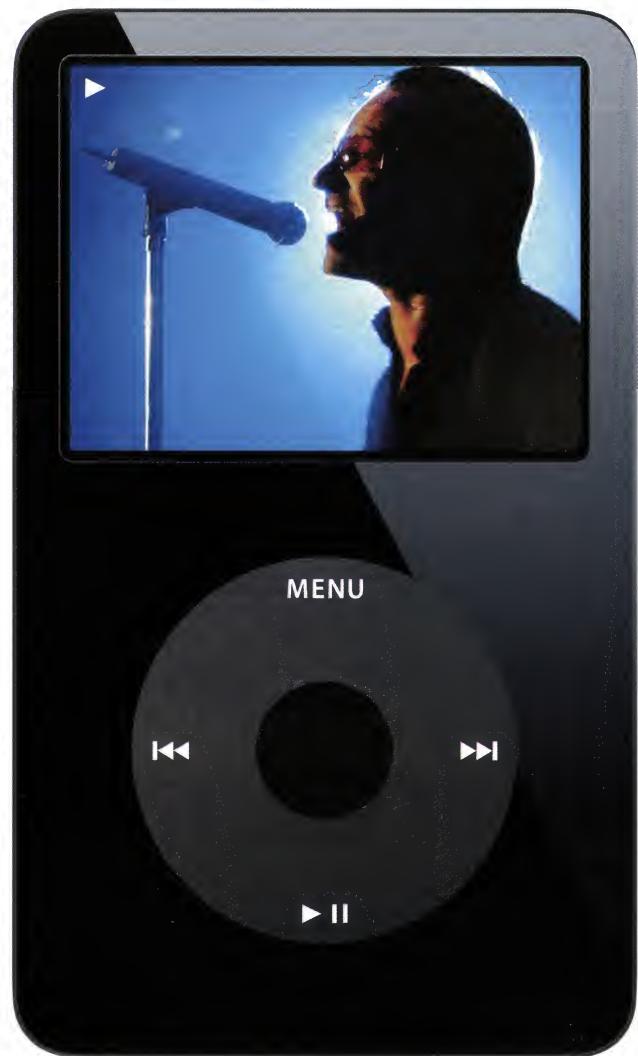
The 30GB model is 31 percent thinner than the 20GB model it replaces, according to Jobs. And the 60GB model is 12 percent thinner than the 20GB model, he added. "And we make them in black, too," said Jobs.

"Because millions of people around the world will buy this new iPod to play music, it will quickly become the most popular portable video player in history."

Apple said that both models would be shipping within a week of the announcement.

**iTunes 6 adds video.** Just 35 days after releasing iTunes 5, Apple announced iTunes 6, with several dramatic new features including downloadable TV shows and music videos, and the ability to send music and videos as gifts. "We're doing for video what we've done for music – we're making it easy and affordable to purchase and download, play on your computer, and take with you on your iPod," said Apple CEO Steve Jobs.

Jobs explained that videos purchased and downloaded from the iTunes Music Store employ Apple's FairPlay Digital Rights Management (DRM) scheme, so they can be downloaded and played on multiple computers authorised to listen to and watch protected iTunes content, or transferred to video-capable iPods. There's one caveat, however – videos you purchase from iTunes can't be burned to other media such as CD-R or DVD-R discs.



iTunes 6, available for download immediately, will allow users to purchase TV shows, short films, and music videos online for \$US1.99 from the iTunes Music Store (iTMS). Some of the American Broadcasting Corporation's most popular television shows, "Desperate Housewives," and "Lost," and the new drama series "Night Stalker" will be available for \$US1.99 per episode, as will two titles from the Disney Channel, "That's so Raven" and "The Suite Life of Zack and Cody." The ABC is owned by the Walt Disney Co.

"For the first time ever, hit primetime shows can be purchased online the day after they air on TV," said Robert Iger, CEO of Disney. "We're delighted to be working with Apple to offer fans a new and innovative way to experience our wildly popular shows like 'Desperate Housewives' 'Lost' and 'That's So Raven.'"

Over 2000 music videos from hundreds of artists are also available,



including works by Coldplay and Kanye West, and exclusive videos from the Beastie Boys and U2. In addition, the first ever video iTunes Originals is being released with an exclusive performance and interview from Death Cab for Cutie as well as an exclusive video album from Brazilian Girls. The store will also include six short films from Academy Award-winning Pixar Animation Studios.

Other major new features in iTunes 6 include expanded online gift options which now allow customers to give specific songs, albums, music videos or their own iTunes playlists as gifts. Previously, users were limited to sending gift certificates or setting up allowances. This new feature will allow iTMS customers to purchase and send specific content to anyone with an e-mail address, whether or not that person has an iTMS account. • Matthew Honan

## iMac digital entertainment hub

Apple unveiled its new iMac G5 at the special press event at which it also unveiled video-capable iPods and iTunes. The new iMac G5 starts at \$1999, and includes new software and new functionality — including a remote control and built-in iSight webcam.

"We introduced the third-generation iMac about a year ago," Jobs said to attendees of the event. "I'm pleased to report we've sold more than one million of them."

The new iMac ships with a remote control that allows users to view video content, listen to music and view videos without needing to be right in front of the computer. It also ships with a built-in version of Apple's iSight, which up to now has been available only as an add-on peripheral.

The updated iMac G5 has a more slender profile than its predecessor — up to 1cm thinner and 15 percent lighter. It also features new software as standard issue: Front Row and Photo Booth.

**New software.** Front Row is what interacts with the simple remote control Apple now includes with the iMac. Front Row can control DVD and iMovie playback, and gives users a way of watching QuickTime movie trailers, as well as music videos and television shows purchased from the iTunes Music Store using iTunes 6.

Jobs called Front Row "one of the most amazing things [Apple has] done in a while."

Jobs compared the simple six-button remote control that ships with the new iMac G5 to the ones available with Windows Media Center-based PCs, littered with dozens of buttons, and said, "I don't know if there's ever been a slide that shows what Apple's all about like this one."

Photo Booth lets users take snapshots using the iSight camera, then add visual effects such as sepia tint, x-ray, bulge and squeeze. Once you're done playing with your pictures you can share them using Apple's Mail application, iPhoto, or save them as icons iChat and Address Book.

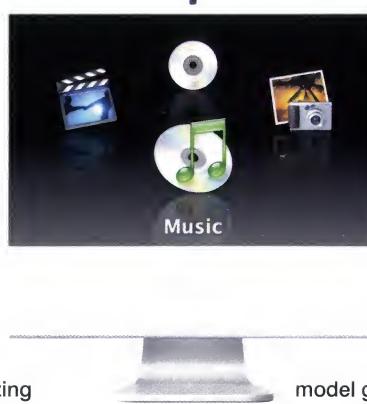
**Improved performance and better hardware.** As with its predecessor, the iMac G5 is available in 17-inch and 20-inch widescreen configurations, but the systems use faster processors; the 17-inch model has been bumped from 1.8GHz to 1.9GHz, and the 20-inch from 2.0GHz to 2.1GHz. Frontside bus speed has been bumped from 600MHz to 633MHz on the 17-inch and from 667MHz to 700MHz on the 20-inch.

The 17-inch model features a 160GB hard disk drive, while the 20-inch gets a 250GB hard disk drive. Apple previously offered a low-end 17-inch iMac with a CD-RW/DVD-ROM "Combo" optical drive; now all units get an 8x "SuperDrive" capable of burning DVD-R media.

The iMac G5 is also the first Macintosh model to feature PCI Express graphics. PCI Express is a growing standard on PCs, and provides faster performance for graphics systems than what the AGP interface on previous models is capable of doing.

ATI's Radeon X600 Pro is featured on the 17-inch iMac G5, while the 20-inch model gets the Radeon X600 XT. Both systems are coupled with 128MB VRAM. They ship standard with 512MB of 533MHz DDR2 SDRAM, expandable to 2.5GB, and also feature built-in AirPort Extreme wireless networking and Bluetooth 2.0+EDR (Enhanced Data Rate).

"We think this is one of the best computers we've ever made," said Jobs. • Peter Cohen



**Hot Links**
[www.apple.com/au](http://www.apple.com/au)

Big piles of money

## Apple's biggest quarter

**A**t the start of October Apple Computer reported a profit of \$US430 million or 50 cents per diluted share for its 2005 fiscal fourth quarter. The company posted revenue of \$US3.68 billion, the highest revenue and earnings in the company's history. These results compare to revenue of \$US2.35 billion and a net profit of \$US106 million, or 13 cents per diluted share, in the year-ago quarter.

Apple said it shipped 1,236,000 Macs and 6,451,000 iPods during the quarter, representing 48 percent growth in Macs and 220 percent growth in iPods over the year-ago quarter. One million of those iPods were the nano model, introduced only 17 days prior to the end of the quarter. Despite such phenomenal sales, iPod sales fell somewhat short of the 7.5 million units some analysts had predicted, causing Apple's stock price to drop slightly following the news. International sales accounted for 40 percent of the quarter's revenue, the company said in a statement.

For fiscal 2005, Apple generated revenue of \$US13.93 billion and a net profit of \$US1.335 billion, reflecting annual growth of 68 percent and 384 percent, respectively, and representing the highest annual revenue and net profit in the company's history.

Looking ahead to the next quarter, Apple chief financial officer Peter Oppenheimer said he expects revenue of about \$US4.7 billion. • Jim Dalrymple



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\* The ADVC55 AC Kit (sold separately) is required when connecting to a 4-pin IEEE 1394 port



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## ■ BRIEFS



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Carte Orange

## Autodesk acquires Alias

**C**AD specialist Autodesk announced in October that it has signed an agreement to acquire Alias, the Canadian developer of Maya, MotionBuilder and other software. The deal is valued at \$US182 million in cash. Autodesk is the company behind AutoCAD, the standard in CAD software. The company also owns discreet, developer of Combustion, the compositing application used in cinema and video.

Carl Bass, Autodesk chief operating officer, describes the two companies as having complementary solutions for design and media customers. "By combining the technology and talents of our two companies, we will be better able to continue delivering solutions that address our customers' complex needs," said Bass in a statement.

Alias was, up until 2004, a subsidiary of Silicon Graphics. In April, 2004, it was announced that Alias was to be acquired by Accel-KKR, a private equity firm, assisted by Alias' own management. The deal was valued at \$US57.5 million. Alias then went on to acquire Kaydara, developers of MotionBuilder and creators of the FBX 3D authoring and interchange format.

The acquisition is subject to closing conditions and regulatory approval. • Peter Cohen

## LaCie plays the big card

**J**UST when you thought 1GB USB thumb drives were huge, LaCie has upped the ante massively by announcing both 4GB and 8GB USB-based drives the size of credit cards. What's more, the company has pushed the price per gigabyte down to under \$40, thanks to the fact the device is actually a hard drive rather than a flash key.

Measuring 55mm by 85mm, only 6mm thick and weighing about 60g, the Carte Orange should fit comfortably in most wallets. It is encased in a sturdy metal and plastic enclosure and draws its power entirely from the USB bus. It's compatible with USB 1.1 ports, but obviously you'll need USB 2.0 to get the full 9MB/sec transfer speed.

The 4GB version costs \$219 and the 8GB is \$299, and both are available now. • Matthew JC. Powell



## Photoshop Elements 4 for Mac in development

**A**DOBE Systems released Photoshop Elements 4 at the end of September, but the new version was for Windows only. With no mention of a new Mac version, some speculated that the company may be phasing out the Mac product, but Adobe said later that is definitely not happening.

Adobe explained that with its professional products, a simultaneous release is important to its customers and they adjust their product teams' efforts and resources accordingly. By doing this, Photoshop or Creative Suite users are able to count on being able to work collaboratively with their counterparts.

"For our professional applications like Photoshop and the entire Creative Suite, simultaneous, cross-platform releases continue to be critical," an Adobe representative said. "Graphics professionals often share working files across heterogeneous networks, and cross-platform releases allow them to make a smooth transition to the new version."

Unlike professionals, consumers who typically purchase products like Photoshop Elements don't work collaboratively, so simultaneous releases are not as important. "This reality gives Adobe the opportunity to balance our resources differently for our consumer products, while still delivering the right products at the right time," said Adobe's spokesperson.

While Adobe said that its Windows version of Elements did have more sales than the Mac version, the company said it is still committed to the Macintosh community. "We've seen an overwhelmingly positive response to Photoshop Elements 3.0 for the Mac and have also seen an increase in sales within this community. Our Mac customers are still very important to us," said the Adobe spokesperson.

Adobe would not say when the Mac version would ship or what new features the product will have. • Jim Dalrymple

## Apple increases .Mac storage to 1GB, adds Groups

**A**PPLE made several changes to its .Mac service in September, providing members with increased storage and adding a new feature called Groups. The increased storage and Groups feature are available immediately.

Configuration of the increased storage is available in users' account settings on the .Mac web site. Once you log in, you can choose the amount of your 1GB of .Mac storage to use for e-mail and what portion you would like to use for iDisk.

Apple has also increased the .Mac Family Pack to a total of 2GB of storage.

Apple also launched a new feature to the service, Groups. This service allows .Mac users to setup a group web site and invite members to join. By setting up a group, you can invite people that share specific interests to gather in one place and post information to your group web site.

Groups are immediately available once you log in to your .Mac account. • Jim Dalrymple

**Hot Links**[flawedmusicplayer.com](http://flawedmusicplayer.com)

Matthew Peterson's major complaint

## iPod nano screen concerns

**S**INCE being introduced in September the iPod nano has taken the MP3 market by storm, earning accolades from reviewers and industry analysts alike, but not everyone is completely satisfied. Some customers have complained about scratched and/or broken screens on their iPod nano, leading one user to even set up a web site to outline his problems.

Apple's Senior Vice President of Worldwide Product Marketing Phil Schiller said there are two completely separate issues going on here. One is the broken screen and the other is the complaint about the iPod screen scratches.

iPod nano owner Matthew Peterson set up his web site, (formerly known as [ipod-nanoflaw.com](http://ipod-nanoflaw.com) – see "Hot links"), to share his grievances about his broken iPod nano screen. Peterson invited others to send in pictures of their iPod nano screens, which he posted to the web site.

In addressing the broken screens, the first of the two issues, Apple said that it has tracked down the problem. "This is a real but minor issue involving a vendor quality problem in a small number of units," Schiller said. "In fact, this issue has affected less than one tenth of one percent of the total iPod nano units that we've shipped. It is not a design issue."

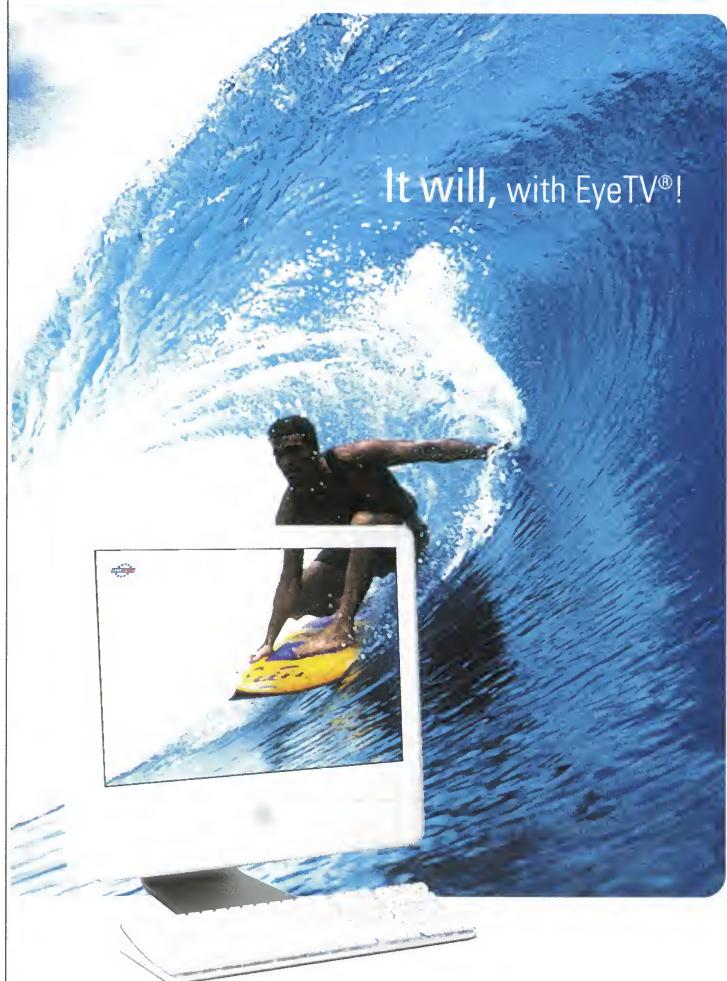
Schiller said that if customers find they have this problem, all they have to do is contact AppleCare and their iPod will be replaced.

The second issue deals with complaints posted on web sites that say the iPod nano screen scratches too easily, perhaps even being more susceptible to scratching than previous iPod models.

Apple said that the screens on the iPod nano are made with the same material that is found in the company's fourth-generation iPod, which, to date, is complaint free. "We have received very few calls from customers reporting this problem – we do not think this is a widespread issue," said Schiller. "If customers are concerned about scratching we suggest they use one of the many iPod nano cases to protect their iPod." ● *Jim Dalrymple*



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## ■ MUSIC

**Hot Links**

[www.digidesign.com](http://www.digidesign.com)

Home of Pro Tools — click on "Worldwide sites" and select Australia

## Digidesign announces Pro Tools 7

**D**IIGIDESIGN announced Pro Tools 7 at the Audio Engineering Society (AES) conference in October. The new version of the company's digital audio workstation software delivers significantly expanded MIDI and audio recording and editing capabilities, greater mixing power and flexibility, enhanced efficiency and improved ease of use, according to Digidesign.

Compatible with Mac OS X Tiger, Pro Tools 7 adds new music creation tools such as Instrument Tracks for simple and straightforward integration of virtual instruments, non-destructive real-time MIDI processing, and the ability to work with industry-standard REX and ACID files, according to Digidesign General Manager, Dave Lebolt.

Lebolt said the new version also includes optimisations for the host processing engine that boosts RTAS plug-in counts by as much as 150 percent on multi-processor computers.

"In many cases, that means we can now run more than twice as many RTAS virtual instruments or signal processing plug-ins as in previous releases on a given CPU," said Lebolt. "Pro Tools 7 software is power-packed to give our users more flexibility to create completely within the Pro Tools environment."

The new software will be available for Pro Tools|HD, Pro Tools LE, and Pro Tools M-Powered systems. Pricing was not available at press time, but anyone who purchased a new Pro Tools|HD, Pro Tools LE, or an upgrade to Pro Tools TDM 6.9.x or Pro Tools LE 6.9x software, from an authorised dealer on or after September 1, 2005, is automatically eligible for a free upgrade to the corresponding version of Pro Tools 7 software. Current Pro Tools M-Powered customers are eligible for a free update to Pro Tools M-Powered 7 software. Complete upgrade information will be available when Pro Tools 7 software ships. •Jim Dalrymple



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# Spinning a better Web

**Expert tips for getting the most out of Safari and Firefox, building better blogs, and creating professional-looking web pages**

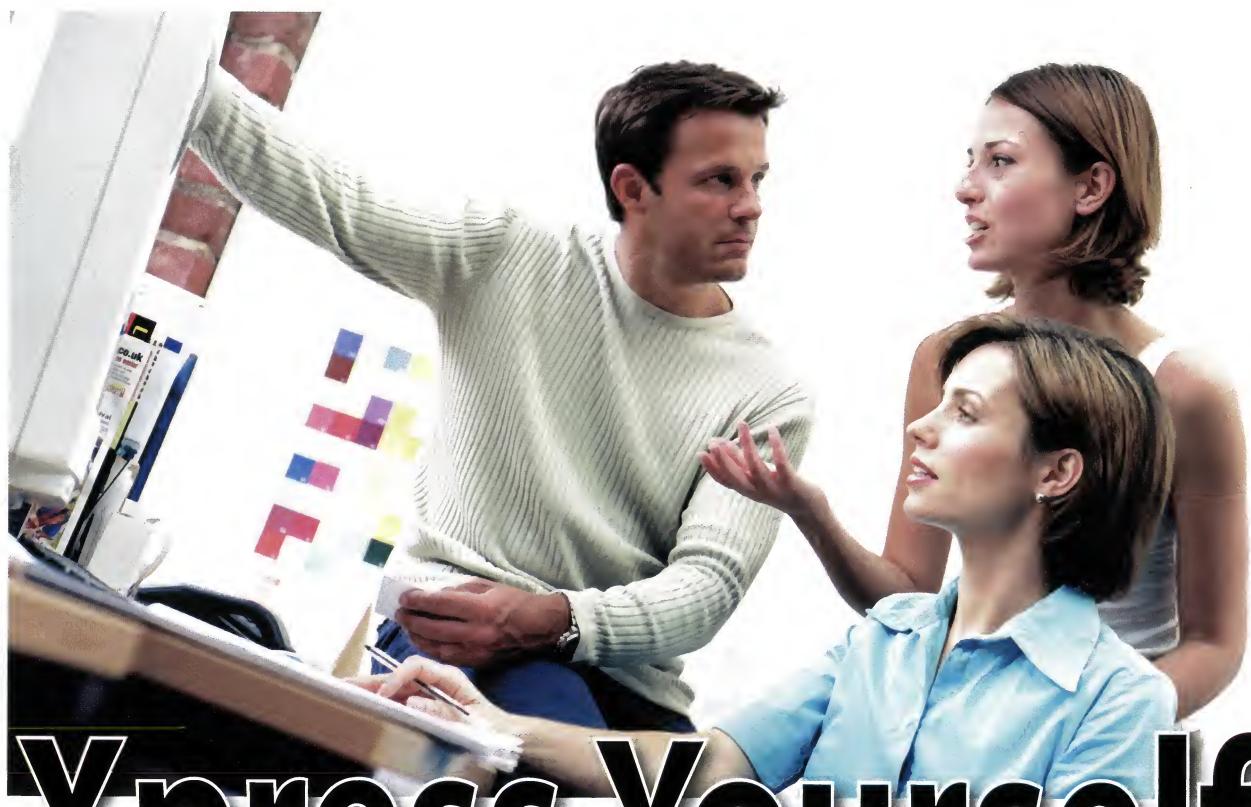
You'd think that, 15 years after the web was invented, we'd know everything we need to know about browsing and building the web. But we don't.

For one thing, browsers keep getting better. The latest version of Apple's Safari has plenty of new features. Though Mozilla's Firefox has only a fraction of Safari's market share, it's rapidly gaining converts, thanks to its seemingly endless customisability.

Meanwhile, a new weblog is born every second — blogging has clearly gone

mainstream. And each month brings a slew of new tools that can help you make your web pages more beautiful, more interesting, and easier to use.

In the pages that follow are tips for using the latest versions of Safari and Firefox, advice on picking the Mac-compatible blogging tool that's right for you, and a guide to the best low-cost and free web-building tools out there. Add all that to this issue's review of the latest browsers, and it's everything you need to know about the web today.



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The freedom to create



By Fleur Doidge.

**Hot Links**[www.macintouch.com/newsrecent.shtml](http://www.macintouch.com/newsrecent.shtml)

MacInTouch news, commentary and forum

[www.asx.com.au](http://www.asx.com.au)

Australian Stock Exchange website

## Buzzle word for the day

No matter how much one might be tempted to complain about Apple, things aren't as bad for resellers as they were in the days of Buzzle. Or are they?

Buzzle was a retail chain thought up around the turn of the century by six prominent Australian resellers: Manning Computers, Choice Connections, DesignWyse, StatusGraph, GM Computer and Mac's Place. Independent Apple retailer Next Byte was originally also in the consortium, but pulled out early as a result of dissent in the ranks of the members about relative power and profitability.

At the time, Buzzle owned 24 of 68 AppleCentres in Australia, reportedly accounting for around 35 percent of Apple's revenue in this country. Apple's reseller community had long been troubled by poor margins and marketing issues and wanted to gain economies of scale and a better national reach from single-brand advertising.

Buzzle — initially intended to raise capital through a float on the Australian Stock Exchange — sank with nary a trace in less than a year. Apple sales at the time had plummeted locally.

Analysts blamed inequitable Australian pricing — Apple presumably has to make more profit from each computer sold to meet Australian overheads than in the US — a poor market or even broad repercussions from the dot-com bubble burst for the failure, but the resellers involved saw things otherwise.

Two directors of Buzzle — Donald Hartono and Wing Nen Liu — filed suit against Apple, claiming the vendor had forced the consortium to buy obsolete inventory — a practice known in the trade as "channel stuffing". The complainants alleged that Apple had not offered the credit promised and had forced Buzzle to stock unpopular items such as PowerMac G4 Cubes and "snow" iMacs. They lost.

These directors had signed personal guarantees for \$257,000 and \$5.4 million. The other four settled with Apple, but allegedly lost their houses. The consortium, which on the face of things had seemed such a good idea, went into receivership in March 2001, owing \$20 million of some \$30 million in debt to Apple.

Then, in September this year, Buzzle liquidator Armstrong Wily announced it was suing Apple for \$57 million. Andrew Wily of Armstrong Wily told the *Australian* daily broadsheet that the liquidator believed Apple was effectively a shadow director of the reseller consortium.

Wily claimed Apple was itself thus at least partly to blame for the failure of Buzzle. Wily alleged in the news report that a \$15 million debt to Apple had been transferred to Buzzle's books. Then Buzzle ran up another debt — for some \$22 million — for stock from Apple.

Apple had at the time of writing not commented on the looming resurrection of its Buzzle problems. The *Australian* said in its



September report that Armstrong Wily would allege at court that Apple knew Buzzle was broke and, being a shadow director of sorts, should not have allowed it to run up further debts. "As such there is a legal argument that Apple may be held liable for debts incurred by Buzzle. Further, we are claiming that the charge over Buzzle is void," Wily was quoted as saying.

Originally, Apple alleged Buzzle directors Hartono and Wing, and the investigation they instigated, were biased against it. The giant vendor also reportedly tried to have liquidator Armstrong Wily removed from the investigation, claiming bias. Those claims failed in the Supreme Court of New South Wales on 12 August 2003.

Buzzle also alleged Apple had been supplying defective products. Some commentators scoffed, saying the resellers were greedy and had timed their foray into the market very poorly. Buzzle was also mismanaged, some said.

Adam Steinhardt, boss of Next Byte, told this writer in a 2003 interview that the reseller had seen the failure of Buzzle coming. Next Byte got in and then got out again, in August 2000, before the ill-fated consortium went down in flames several months later. Steinhardt said he could see the writing on the wall. "We could see what was going to happen. We could see a couple of businesses going in to use it as a lifeline. They didn't have their basics in order. There was deceit — a cover-up — so there wasn't a stable financial situation for the Buzzle launch," Steinhardt said.

Buzzle accused Apple of having an approach that has gradually destroyed numbers of resellers. Others said Buzzle was always going to have a hard time succeeding when its directors had been competitors for essentially the same customer dollars for so long. Still others said distributors must get tougher on non-viable Apple resellers when it came to lending credit.

Who is right? Only the courts can figure that out, but it looks like the Buzzle resellers have come back fighting. Watch this space.

Meanwhile, here's some good feedback, as posted to the MacInTouch web site in September. One Apple user wrote in to say that he had forwarded to Apple's head office some marketing ideas that he believed could significantly lift Apple profits. Expecting no reply or at best a form letter from an Apple staffer, he had e-mailed his plan to Steve Jobs. "Within 30 minutes of sending the letter my phone rang," the user was quoted as saying, "and it was Steve Jobs! He was intrigued by some of my suggestions and wanted to talk to me about them."

We like to end on an optimistic note. No, really. ☺

**Fleur Doidge is a longtime observer of the Mac reseller channel in Australia.**

By Dan Warne.



### Hot Links

[www.ausmac.net](http://www.ausmac.net)

Where you'll find all the software described herein

# Off the net

## Latest shareware and free downloads



### ■ JiWire WiFi Hotspot Finder Widget 2.0 Freeware X (10.4 or later)

An incredibly useful Dashboard widget that shows all wireless networks within range of your Mac, and their signal strengths. You just click the network name to connect. Once you're connected to the net you can also search JiWire's worldwide database of hotspot locations.

### ■ Aion 1.6 Freeware X (10.3 or later)

Keep track of the time in different time zones via a drop-down menu extra. Time zones shown are configurable.

### ■ Transmission 0.2 Freeware X (10.3.9 or later)

Fast new BitTorrent P2P file sharing client that's written directly in C for maximum speed.

### ■ Milestone Reminder 2.0.0 EA2 \$US6 Shareware X (10.2.3 or later)

Shows a list of birthdays and anniversaries for contacts in your Address Book, ordered by the next event that will occur. Can also add birthday alarms into iCal.

### ■ Upcoming Birthdays Widget 1.0 Freeware X (10.4 or later)

A birthday reminder Dashboard widget that extracts birthdays from your Address Book.

### ■ DropDMG 2.7.2 \$US15 Shareware X (10.3 or later)

Create OS X disk images (including compression if you want) simply dragging and dropping files. Good for backing up your home folder across several DVDs or CDs, as DMGs can be split across multiple discs.

### ■ WorldView for iPod 1.0 \$US19.95 Shareware X (iPod)

Put basic info about every country in the world on your iPod, including timezones, dialling codes, emergency numbers, and general background info about the country.

### ■ WinShortcuter 1.3 Freeware X (10.3 or later)

If you work in a mainly Windows-based environment, this program allows you to follow Windows shortcuts on file servers that wouldn't otherwise work.

### ■ Microsoft Office 11.2 Free update X (10.2.8 or later)

"Service Pack 2" for Microsoft Office Mac:2004 which improves Entourage compatibility with Exchange servers and stability under OS X 10.4.

### ■ iPSP 2.5.5 \$US19.99 Sharware X (10.4 or later)

Convert DVDs and other videos to be played on your Playstation Portable. You can also sync iPhoto albums and iTunes playlists, as well as other things, with your PSP automatically.

### ■ MacResponder 1.5.1 From \$US9.95 Shareware X (10.2 or later)

Set up an "out of office" message or other automatic response on your Mac. Flexible rules, including the ability to provide different responses for different mailboxes and more.

### ■ Scale to Mail 0.8.1 Freeware X (10.3 or later)

Drop any image(s) onto this droplet and they will be automatically rescaled to an e-mailable size and then attached to a new e-mail in Apple Mail.

### ■ Dot-tunes 1.1p \$29.95 Shareware X (10.2 or later)

Australian-made software that lets you share your iTunes music library with friends over the internet (or play your home music library at work, for example.)

### ■ Opera 8.5 Freeware X (10.2 or later)

The Opera web browser is now completely free of charge, with no banner ads etc. Very fast and some unique features like an in-built mail client and tabbed browsing that shows thumbnails of your open web pages.

### ■ Skype Widget 1.02 Freeware X (10.4 or later)

Place calls with Skype using this Dashboard widget, regardless of whether Skype is open or not. Also has handy info like world dialling codes in a slide-down pane.

### ■ eBay Watcher Widget 1.3 Freeware X (10.4 or later)

Monitor an auction item on eBay using this constantly updating widget.

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Griffin Technology



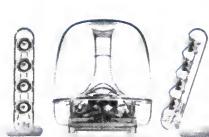
iTrip FM Transmitter  
for 3, 4G iPod and iPod Mini

Monster Cable



iPod Charger

Harman Kardon



SoundSticks II  
for iPods, MP3 Players  
and Computers

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## ■ INTEL NEWS



## Hot Links

[www.intel.com](http://www.intel.com)

Apple's new chip buddy

## The Intel way

**I**N late August 2005, I attended the Intel Developer Forum at San Francisco's Moscone West Convention Center – which is, coincidentally, where Apple holds its Worldwide Developers Conference (WWDC). Although both conferences are venues where a big company can connect with and help the people who develop the hardware and software that make the company's products better, there was one big difference. Before the keynote by Intel CEO Paul Otellini, an announcement came over the PA system. It warned that future predictions are just that – predictions – and that such statements always involve risk and uncertainty.

Why was that such a big deal? Because Apple almost never talks about the future. It's a very secretive company – in fact, everything but the



keynote at Apple's WWDC is off-limits to the press, and the contents of those sessions are protected by non-disclosure agreements. Apple typically announces products and partnerships only after they are signed, sealed, and ready to deliver (one exception: OS releases, which Apple likes to parade around like the giant cats whose names they bear).

Contrast Otellini's keynote to Apple's approach: the Intel CEO talked about new chips scheduled for release in the second and third quarters of 2006, while Apple won't even confirm that Steve Jobs likes to wear black.

Otellini showed off Merom, Conroe, and Woodcrest – new processors for mobile, desktop, and server computers, respectively. (Borrowing a page from Steve Jobs, Otellini revealed that he was running the presentation from a laptop with a Merom processor.) All three processors are dual-core, use 65-nanometer production technology, and are 64-bit – which will be welcome news to people who feared that the switch to Intel's chip lineup meant sliding back to 32-bit computing on the Mac.

Intel will continue to share its roadmap, and Apple will continue to deny the existence of anything it hasn't announced – be it animal, vegetable, or mineral. If nothing else, Intel's candour could increase the odds of Mac rumour sites getting things right. • Jonathan Seff

## ■ COMPETITION



## Hot Links

[www.dm-holdings.com](http://www.dm-holdings.com)

Farewell, Rio

## MP3 pioneer gone upriver

**B**EFORE the iPod or the iTunes Music Store, there was the Rio – the first handheld MP3 player to hit the market, in 1998. In another demonstration of how popular Apple's music players have become, the makers of the Rio line announced in late August that they would stop selling the portable digital audio players by the end of September.

D&M Holdings (see "Hot links"), the Tokyo-based company that owns the Rio brand, said in a financial report that the competition was intense, and that the "market was not a strong enough strategic fit with the company's core and profitable premium consumer electronics brands to warrant additional investment in the category."

Apple's players – which range from the flash-memory-based iPod shuffle to the 60GB colour-screen iPod – dominate the market. During a recent conference call with financial analysts, Apple CFO Peter Oppenheimer cited a report, from the market-

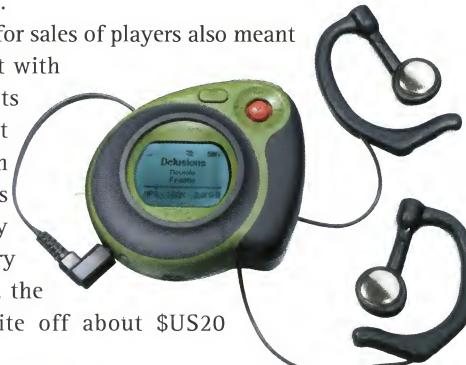
research company NPD Techworld, that indicates that Apple's share of the digital music-player market is more than 70 percent.

At the same time, Creative Technology, whose CEO declared a marketing war against the iPod last year, has seen its profits shrink considerably. The Singapore-based maker of digital audio players and PC audio components said that total sales in its financial reporting year ending June 30, 2005, had doubled to \$US1.2 billion, while net profit had crashed from \$US134.2 million in the previous year to \$US600,000.

Creative's average selling price was hit by fiercer-than-expected price competition in the market – the popular Zen Micro player's price fell by about \$US40 during the April–June quarter, for example. In a conference call with analysts, Craig McHugh, the president of Creative Labs, identified price cuts by market leader Apple Computer as the main reason that Creative had to lower its prices.

Slower-than-hoped-for sales of players also meant the company was left with more unsold products and components than it had anticipated. With prices of components falling, particularly those of flash memory and hard-disk drives, the company had to write off about \$US20 million in inventory.

• Peter Cohen and Martyn Williams



■ PARTNERS



**Hot Links**

[www.apple.com/itunes/mobile/](http://www.apple.com/itunes/mobile/)  
iTunes on your phone

## Apple smart phone "a matter of time"

**M**OTOROLA'S CEO Ed Zander has fueled industry speculation that Apple would release its own smart phone. Motorola also said that disparaging comments made in early October about Apple's iPod nano were "taken out of context."

Many industry analysts have said that Apple should develop its own smart phone. Speculation within the Macintosh community about an Apple branded phone have persisted for several years, but in its first foray into the mobile market, Apple instead chose to partner with Motorola. "And we know that they are going to build a smart phone – it's only a matter of time," said Zander.

The iTunes compatible Motorola ROKR was announced at a special event hosted by Apple in San Francisco on 7 September. However, since its introduction reviews of the device throughout the press have been mixed.

Shortly after the launch, Zander was reported to have made disparaging comments about Apple's iPod nano – comments some believed to be in response to frustration that the iPod nano upstaged the introduction of the ROKR.

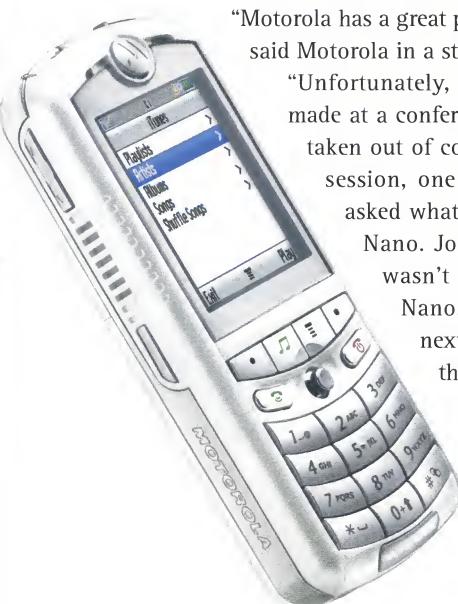
"Screw the nano," said Zander. "What the hell does the nano do? Who listens to 1000 songs? People are going to want devices that do more than just play music, something that can be seen in many other countries with more advanced mobile phone networks and savvy users," he said. The ROKR has the capacity to play only 50 songs, though a larger-capacity version capable of holding 100 songs is promised.

However, while not denying the comments were made, Motorola has said they were taken out of context.

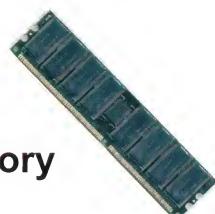
"Motorola has a great partnership with Apple," said Motorola in a statement.

"Unfortunately, Ed Zander's comments made at a conference in San Diego were taken out of context. During the Q&A session, one questioner repeatedly asked what Zander thought of the Nano. Jokingly, Zander said he wasn't there to talk about the Nano, but to talk about the next big thing happening in the industry – the fusion of the phone and music. ROKR with iTunes was a good beginning, he said, and there's more to come."

● Jim Dalrymple



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AcidSearch  
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# The secrets of Safari 2.0

WHILE Mac users now have several high-quality browsers to choose from, Safari is still their clear favourite. However, even Safari 2.0 — the version recently released as part of OS X 10.4 — isn't quite perfect. Here are a few ways to make the most of Safari 2.0, as well as some tips on taking advantage of its lesser-known new features.

**Send web pages.** Before Tiger, Safari offered no simple way to send someone a link to a web page. You had to copy the URL, switch to your e-mail program, create a new message, and paste the URL into it. (Sure, there were workarounds involving JavaScript bookmarklets — but for many users, these tricks were more hassle than they were worth.)

## Extending Safari

Safari is a great browser all by itself, but third-party add-ons can help it do even more. Here are a few of our favourites. (You should find instructions for installing each add-on either on its developer's web site (see "Hot links") or in the disk image that accompanies the download.)

**AcidSearch.** Improving on Safari's search box, AcidSearch lets you choose from a number of search engines, instead of limiting you to Google.

It even lets you add sites to the list of options. After you install AcidSearch, whenever you click on the magnifying-glass icon in Safari's search box, the drop-down menu lets you specify which search engine you want to use. (It'll stick with that one until you switch again.) There's even a handy Google This Site option, which runs a Google search on just the site you're currently browsing (free).

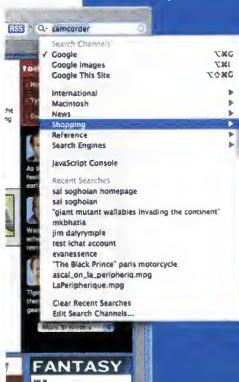
**PDF Browser Plugin.** Safari 2.0 offers basic PDF-viewing features, and the latest version of Adobe Reader includes a PDF plug-in for most web browsers. If

you view a lot of PDFs online, you'll want to install PDF Browser Plugin. It provides multiple layout options; lets you view different parts of a PDF simultaneously; supports annotation, forms, tables of contents, and links; and offers additional PDF printing options (home, education, or non-commercial use, free; commercial site license, \$US69).

**PithHelmet.** Using PithHelmet, you can limit the number of ads you see, set a privacy level on cookies, and control how many times animated GIF images play. You can even customise PithHelmet's ad-blocking rules to provide more or less protection (\$US10).

**Safari Buttons.** Wish Safari had a New Tab button in its toolbar? Now it can. First, add the Bug button to Safari's toolbar (via the View menu in Safari 1.x or via the Customize Address Bar dialog box in Safari 2.0) and then quit Safari. Then run the Safari Buttons installer. The next time you start Safari, that seldom-used Bug button will have become a useful New Tab button. You'll also be rewarded with new keyboard shortcuts that enable and disable image-free browsing. (Web surfing is much faster when you don't have to load pictures.) Just be sure to download the version of Safari Buttons that's right for Safari 2.0 (free).

**Safari Enhancer.** With Safari Enhancer installed, you'll be able to remove underlines from hyperlinks (or change the colour of



**Add engines.** The AcidSearch add-on lets you choose from a number of search sites in Safari.

**Keys to the search.** After you assign a keyword to a search box on nearly any web site, you can type that keyword and your search term in Firefox's Location bar to find what you're looking for.

resulting dialog box, enter a name in the Name field and a short keyword in the Keyword field, and click on Add. Then, to search that site, type the keyword followed by your search term in Firefox's Location bar (not the search box). For example, if I assigned it to my own Interesting Thing of the Day site, I could then type `it cheese` in the Location bar to search for cheese-related articles on that site. By the way, Firefox has a built-in smart keyword for looking up definitions at Dictionary.com: just go to the Location bar, enter `dict` followed by a space and the word you want to look up, and press return.

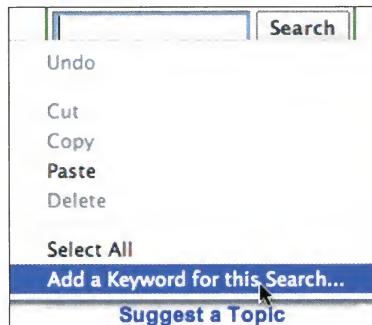
**Change your theme.** While extensions change Firefox's capabilities (see the sidebar "Extending Firefox"), themes change its look-and-feel – its icons, fonts, colours, button shapes, and

If you type about:config into the Firefox Location bar and press return, you'll see a list of hundreds of options that you can modify right from the browser window (see the screenshot "About this browser") — and most of them can't be adjusted in Firefox's Preferences menu. They range from the way your mouse works to obscure network settings. (A full list of these options is on the Mozilla web site — see "Hot links".)

The about:config window displays the name, status, type (Boolean, integer, or string), and value for each option. To change a Boolean (true or false) value, double-click on it; for other options, double-click on the row and then enter a new setting. You can control-click (or right-click) on a value to reset it; from the resulting contextual menu, you can also add, copy, or modify values.

For example, you can use the about:config page to activate a feature called pipelining, which sends multiple HTTP requests at once. With fast internet connections, this can dramatically speed up page loading, as different page elements can load at the same time. To turn on pipelining, double-click on network.http.pipeline to set its value to true; do the same for network.http.proxy.pipeline. Next, double-click on network.http.pipeline.maxrequests and enter the number of simultaneous requests you'd like to send (try entering 8 as a starting point).

You can also add new options if they aren't already on the list. For example, to block Flash-based sites from opening pop-



other interface elements (but not the web pages themselves). To add a theme, choose Tools: Themes and click on the Get More Themes link at the bottom of the window. You install themes the same way you add extensions. To activate a theme, click on the third icon from the left at the bottom of the Themes window (its name and appearance change, depending on the theme you're using), and then restart Firefox.

**Master the keyboard.** If you like to keep your fingers on the keyboard, you'll like Firefox's extensive keyboard shortcuts – many of which do not appear in its menus. (An extensive list can be found on Mozilla's web site – see "Hot links".) My favourites:

> Turn caret browsing on/off: press F7. This feature puts an insertion point on screen, letting you select web text using the keyboard.

> Select the next or previous search engine: press control-up arrow or control-down arrow when the insertion point is in the search box. 

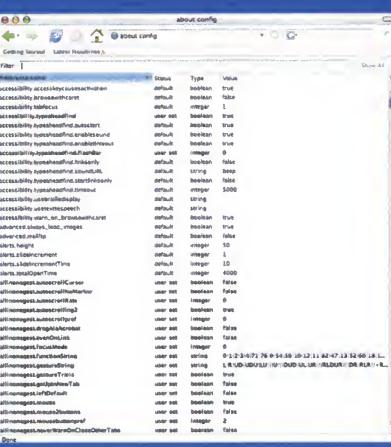
up windows, control-click (or right-click) anywhere on the page and choose New: Integer from the contextual menu. Enter `privacy.popups.disable_from_plugins` as the preference name. For the value, enter 2.

Here's another option you can add: By default, Firefox waits 250 milliseconds before beginning to display a page (allowing more of the page to load into memory first). You may be able to speed up page rendering by removing this delay. Control-click (or right-click) anywhere on the about:config page and choose New: Integer from the contextual menu. Enter nglayout.initialpaint.delay as the preference name and 0 as its value. The amount of improvement (if any) will depend on the speed of your machine and Internet connection; try it out and see if it helps.

Heed two warnings before you dive in: First, some of the about:config settings have no effect in OS X. Second, the about:config window gives you a lot of power, with which you can cause a lot of damage (including utterly disabling Firefox).

So be careful. Before you do anything else, back up the Firefox folder in /your user folder/Library/Application Support.

Changes you make will take effect when you restart Firefox. To undo a change you made, control-click (or right-click) on the setting and choose Reset from the contextual menu. Firefox will return the setting to its default value; if it was a setting you added, it will be given a blank value and will disappear when you quit Firefox.



**About this browser.** To see hundreds of hidden Firefox preferences that you can modify, enter about:config in the Location bar.



## Hot Links

[www.mozilla.org/support/firefox/keyboard](http://www.mozilla.org/support/firefox/keyboard)  
 Firefox keyboard shortcuts  
[kb.mozillazine.org/Firefox:\\_FAQs:\\_About:config\\_Entries](http://kb.mozillazine.org/Firefox:_FAQs:_About:config_Entries)  
 Firefox configuration  
[www.mozilla.org/support/firefox/profile](http://www.mozilla.org/support/firefox/profile)  
 Managing Firefox profiles  
[www.beatnikpad.com/archives/2005/07/20/firefox106](http://www.beatnikpad.com/archives/2005/07/20/firefox106)  
 G5-optimised Firefox builds  
[www.ameake.us/software/fireoxy/](http://www.ameake.us/software/fireoxy/)  
 Fireoxy

# The power user's guide to Firefox



**M**OZILLA FIREFOX is rapidly catching on with Mac users, and for good reason: It's free, fast, and flexible, and it does an outstanding job of displaying most web pages. (This cross-platform browser is also increasingly popular among Windows users, largely because of its excellent pop-up-blocking features). Beneath Firefox's simple interface are some surprisingly powerful features. The following tips will help you maximise this up-and-comer's potential. (All these tips were tested in Firefox 1.0.6 but should also work in newer versions.)

**Take advantage of tabs.** Like most modern browsers, Firefox lets you open multiple web pages as tabs within a single window. It also sports some handy tab-navigation tools you may not know about:

> To move to the next tab, press control-page down or control-tab. To move to the previous tab, press control-page up or control-shift-tab.

> To save the addresses of all open tabs at once (so you can easily return to the same set), choose Bookmarks: Bookmark This Page (or press ⌘-D). Select the Bookmark All Tabs In A Folder option, enter a name, and click on Add. Firefox will create a bookmark folder with the name you selected. To reopen that set of tabs, navigate to that folder in your Bookmarks menu and choose Open In Tabs.

> You can set up Firefox so it opens multiple web sites (each in its own tab) when you click on the Home button. Just go to the sites you want it to open, choose Firefox: Preferences, click on the General icon, and click on Use Current Pages (under Home Page).

**Fast finds.** After a simple preference change, you can type any text into Firefox's search bar to see matching text highlighted instantly.

**Find as you type.** To find text within the current web page, press ⌘-F (as in most Mac apps) or the / (slash) key. Instead of opening up a separate Find window, Firefox opens a search bar at the bottom of the window (see the screenshot "Fast finds"). As soon as it finds a match, it highlights the found text. To make searching even faster and easier, turn on Firefox's Find As You Type feature. To do so, choose Firefox: Preferences, click on the Advanced icon, and select the Begin Finding When You Begin Typing option (it's located in the Accessibility section). Now the search bar will appear and Firefox will start searching as soon as you type any character – no ⌘-F or / required.

**Assign keywords to bookmarks.** If you have a lot of bookmarks, finding the one you want can be tedious – especially if you've organised them into a bunch of nested folders. You can avoid this tedium by assigning keywords to bookmarks that you use often. That way, you can zip to that site with just a few keystrokes. For example, to assign a keyword to [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com), choose Bookmarks: Manage Bookmarks, select the bookmark for that site, and click on the Properties button in the toolbar. (Or you can control-click [or right-click] on the bookmark and select Properties from the contextual menu.) Enter a short text string

(such as ap) in the Keyword field and click on OK. The next time you want to visit Apple's web site, type ap in the Address field and press return.



**Assign keywords to searches.** You can also use keywords to make searching easier. Go to a web page that has a search box. Control-click (or right-click) on that box and choose Add A Keyword For This Search from the pop-up menu (see the screenshot "Keys to the search"). In the



**Import bookmarks from other browsers.** Want to import a bunch of bookmarks from The Omni Group's OmniWeb, Mozilla Firefox, or Microsoft Internet Explorer into Safari 2.0? Just choose File: Import Bookmarks, navigate to the other browser's bookmark file, and click on Import. When the import is finished, Safari will switch to its Bookmarks view, and you'll see a new bookmark collection – named Imported Data – that contains the imported bookmarks. You can then move those bookmarks into folders and/or Safari's Bookmarks bar, as you see fit.

The challenge is finding the bookmark file to import. If you use Internet Explorer, it's a file called Favorites.html, which is in /your user folder/Library/Preferences/Explorer. For Firefox, look for the bookmarks.html file in /your user folder/Library/ApplicationSupport/Firefox/Profiles/string.default (where string is a random string of characters that differs for every user). OmniWeb's bookmark file, Bookmarks.html, is in /your user folder/Library/Application Support/OmniWeb.

**Combine RSS feeds.** Safari's RSS-viewing features are a handy way to track your favourite sites. What you may not realise is that you can view multiple RSS feeds in one window. To do so, first create a folder in your Bookmarks bar (open the Bookmarks view, click on Bookmarks Bar in the Collections column, and then click on the plus-sign button [+] at the bottom of the Bookmark column; you can name the new folder anything you like). Then, one at a time, open the RSS feeds you want to add to the view. For each feed, add a bookmark to your new bookmark folder.

After this one-time setup, simply click on the folder in the

**All the news.** To view multiple RSS feeds in one window, collect them all in a single folder and then choose View All RSS Articles.

Sports ▾ Safari Actions ▾ My Sites ▾ Pubs ▾ Mac ▾

- ESPN.com - NBA
- ESPN.com - Men's College Basketball
- ESPN.com - MLB
- ESPN.com - Bill Simmons Columns
- Idiots Write About Sports
- SI.com

**View All RSS Articles**

**Open in Tabs**

Bookmarks bar and choose View All RSS Articles from the resulting menu (see the screenshot "All the news"). All the articles from all the feeds in the folder will be displayed in a single window; the name of the source feed will be displayed next to each article's title.

**Create a personalised clipping service.** If you view an RSS feed (or group of feeds), you can use the Search Articles command to find articles that contain a particular word or phrase. Even better, you can bookmark the search results to create a live search feed. Safari will then keep an eye on the included feeds, watching for new articles containing your search terms, and it'll notify you when it finds something – voilà: a customised RSS feed.

**Disable PDF viewing.** If you click on a link to a PDF document in Safari 2.0, the browser automatically loads the PDF in its current window. If you'd rather view the PDF in Preview or Acrobat, or download it, you have to wait for it to load and then manually save it to your hard drive.

You can make Safari 2.0 treat PDFs the way Safari 1.x did (that is, save them to your default download folder). Here's how: Quit Safari, launch Terminal, and type: defaults write com.apple.Safari WebKitOmitPDFSupport -bool YES Press return and then relaunch Safari. It will then download PDF documents to your hard drive. You can revert to Safari 2.0's default PDF behaviour by entering this command with NO instead of YES. █

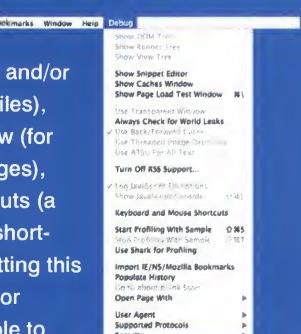
## Debugging Safari

Most Safari users never see the Debug menu. Designed to help programmers and web coders, it has several features that regular users can use too.

To enable the Debug menu, quit Safari, launch Terminal, enter defaults write com.apple.Safari IncludeDebugMenu 1, and press return. When you relaunch Safari, you should see the Debug menu to the right of the Help menu (see the screenshot "Hidden menu").

Some of its interesting options are Show Caches Window (which lets you view and/or clear Safari's various cache files), Show Page Load Test Window (for timing the loading of web pages), Keyboard And Mouse Shortcuts (a huge list of Safari keyboard shortcuts), and User Agent (by setting this option to Windows MSIE 6.0 or Netscape 7.0, you may be able to gain access to sites that don't normally work in Safari).

If you ever tire of this new menu, quit Safari and repeat the Terminal command but replace the numeral 1 with 0 (zero).



**Hidden menu.** Safari's Debug menu is hidden by default. Once you enable it, you'll find all kinds of interesting tools.

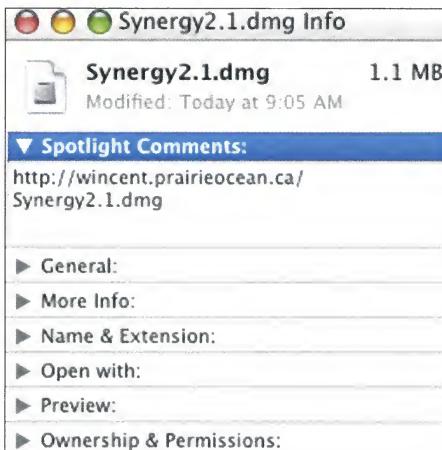
**Where are you from?** Wonder where a downloaded file originally came from? The Info window's Spotlight Comments field will tell you.

Safari 2.0 makes the process as simple as a keyboard shortcut: When you're viewing a web page you want to send, just press ⌘-shift-I (or choose File: Mail Link To This Page). Your default e-mail app will open and create a new message that contains the URL and has the web page's title in its subject field. Just fill in the recipient's address, add a note if you want, and click on Send.

If you use Apple's Mail, Safari also lets you send the contents of a web page – to do so, you could use the ⌘-I keyboard shortcut (or File: Mail Contents Of This Page). But keep in mind that most people would rather receive just a URL than a huge e-mail message full of links and images. Practice restraint with the ⌘-I shortcut – stick to ⌘-shift-I instead.

**Add web images to iPhoto.** Spot a nifty image while you're browsing your favourite blog and want to keep a copy of it in iPhoto? Control-click (or right-click) on it and choose Add Image To iPhoto Library. The image will be instantly imported into iPhoto.

**Save it for later.** In older versions of Safari, "saving" a web page saved only its HTML source code; images and other embedded content were lost. Fortunately, Apple fixed this in Safari 2.0: the Save As command includes a Web Archive



option, which saves nearly everything on the page, including images.

**Search through history.** Searching in Safari's Bookmarks view used to return results from both your bookmarks and your history. In Safari 2.0, you can search more selectively, choosing which of these collections you want to look through.

To search only your history, choose Bookmarks: Show All Bookmarks (or just click on the bookmark icon on the Bookmarks bar); then, in the Collections pane (on the left), click on History. Click on the magnifying-glass icon next to the

search box at the bottom of the window, set the pop-up menu to In History, enter your search term, and press return. You can follow the same procedure to search only a specific bookmark collection.

Unfortunately, Safari can't search the actual content of the sites in your history; it looks for only the information in the two displayed columns – Bookmark and Address. If you want to search the contents of web pages you've visited, check out St. Clair Software's \$US20 HistoryHound (see "Hot links").

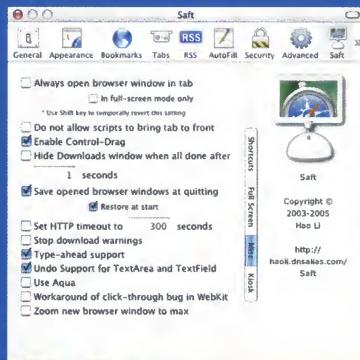
**Discover a download's origins.** To find out where you got a file you downloaded with Safari, select the file in the Finder and then choose File: Get Info (or press ⌘-I). The Info window's Spotlight Comments field will display the URL of the page you downloaded the file from (see the screenshot "Where are you from?").

links), disable caches, change the search engine used by Safari's toolbar search box, and even switch Safari's interface from brushed metal to Aqua. Be sure to download the version for Tiger; the developer also offers versions of Safari Enhancer for older versions of OS X and Safari (free).

**SafariSource.** If you frequently view the source code of web pages, SafariSource is a must-have: it adds syntax colouring to Safari's source view, making it much easier to read. This is a little thing that makes a world of difference (free).

**Saft.** The big kahuna of Safari add-ons, Saft has more than 25 features: It lets you scroll pages by holding down the control key and moving the mouse, automatically save opened tabs when you quit Safari so they're open when you relaunch, create a bookmark folder from a set of tabs, rearrange tabs via drag and drop, and more. You can even specify an external editor, such asTextEdit, to use when entering text in web forms (\$US12).

**Sogudi.** Instead of beefing up the Google search box, Sogudi improves on Safari's search abilities with search shortcuts. In the



**Saft landing.** From this tabbed preference pane, Saft lets you customise more than 25 features, including mouse navigation and tab arrangement.

address box, you enter a special site abbreviation and the terms you want to search for, and then press return. For example, typing hint safari download will return macosxhints.com tips about downloading with Safari. Sogudi includes 14 predefined shortcuts, and you can easily add your own. It also does more than just make searching faster: Want a shortcut for the Crazy Apple Rumors Site? Use Sogudi's preference pane to create a new shortcut (CAR, for instance) for www.crazyapplerumors.com. Then, instead of entering that long URL, you can just type CAR. You can even view Unix man

pages, with the useful man: shortcut (free).

**Taboo.** Ever accidentally lose a bunch of web sites you were browsing because you closed a Safari window with multiple open tabs? Never again: Install Taboo, and whenever you close a Safari window, it will display a dialog box that asks whether you really want to close all the tabs. Such frustration prevention should really be built into Safari. For now, at least, you can rely on Taboo (free).

**Nobody beats the Wizz.** The Wizz RSS Reader's extension puts a full-featured RSS browser in Firefox's sidebar.

Podcast support), try **Sage**.

Simple, more elegant approach (but without whistles). However, its interface is a bit awkward. For includes Podcast support, along with other bells and whistles. I prefer Wizz RSS Reader (see the screenshot "Nobody beats the Wizz").

Several extensions can bulk up Firefox's RSS do. Other things full-featured RSS browsers let you reviews of posts, download Podcasts, or do many tools. I prefer Wizz RSS Reader (see the

you can't mark an article as read or unread, see bookmark item that displays recent headlines, but the bottom of an RSS-enabled site's window to add a minimal RSS capabilities. You can click on an icon at

Wizz RSS Reader and **Sage**. Firefox has

simply by dragging them to a new location. minimalist, which lets you rearrange the order of your tabs where it belongs). For even more flexibility, you should also add

bad it doesn't put the close button on the left side of the tab. (Too Safari, add the Tab X extension. It does just one tiny thing: it puts an individual close button on each tab, replacing the single (and counternatural) close button at the right end of the tabs bar. Too

**Tab X and Mint.** If you want Firefox to look and act more like

similar interests use **StumbleUpon**. determine which sites appear when other web surfers with give sites "thumbs-up" or "thumbs-down" ratings; these ratings hundreds of topics that match your interests. It also lets you button to go to a random web site devoted to any of the StumbleUpon toolbar to Firefox. Click on the toolbar's Stumble

this simple but incredibly addictive extension adds a SessionSaver. After you sign up for a StumbleUpon account, quit it, SessionSaver will put everything back the way it was.

relaunch. Even if Firefox crashes or if you force-quit it, SessionSaver — every tab and window, every half-filled web form, every scroll-bar position (everything) — when you quit the browser, and then it returns the browser to that state upon

your browser — every tab and window, every

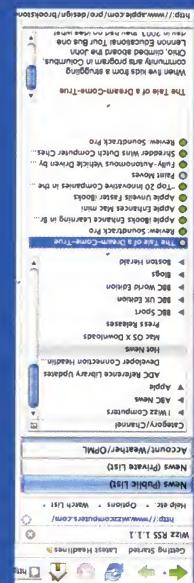
SessionSaver. As its name implies, the remarkable SessionSaver saves the state of your saved documents; and much more.

elements from them; sort, backup, and export saved pages, highlight them, and remove other linked pages — to an archive that you can search from "including graphics, movies, audio, and page — including graphics, movies, audio, and

extension. It lets you save all or part of a web extension. Firefox fans love the browser's extensions — third-party apps that

previous track, adjust the volume, display the current song name,

Firefox window; they let you play, pause, go to the next or



**FoxyTunes.** If you want to control iTunes from within Firefox, try FoxyTunes. It adds a series of tiny iTunes controls to the status bar at the bottom of the drag and drop the app onto Firefox again.

screenshot "In good form". To undo the change, just those controls with new, more elegant ones (see the stock graphics with new, more elegant ones (see the onto Firefox, and drag and drop Firefox's

look-and-feel that they have in Safari. You can shift up buttons, checkboxes, and so on) don't have the same complain that they have in web-page forms (radio checkboxes, and so on) don't have the controls in web-page forms (radio

**Foxley.** Mac users trying out Firefox frequently all-around operation.

of each Firefox release, they provide noticeably faster Neil Lee provides free builds, optimised for G5 Macs, Neil Lee lists if your Mac has a G5 processor. Your must-get list unless you create a new profile on, but a G5-optimised build should be at the top of Firefox G5-optimised builds, it isn't exactly an add-

significantly more Mac-like.

feel of Safari, but it comes closer — and it makes Firefox feel brushed theme, from a |vo, doesn't exactly match the look-and-buttons to Firefox's more generic-looking controls. The brushed theme, I prefer Safari's brushed-metal toolbars, tabs,

details on the Mozilla web site — see "Hot links".)

troubleshooting step that can solve many Firefox problems. That's an all-purpose disappar unless you create a new profile. (That's a non-functional extension, you restart Firefox. A few particularly stubborn add-ons may not change your mind or encounter a non-functional extension, you parties develop these extensions, conflicts can occur if you

parts of Firefox. A few particular buttons at the bottom of the Extensions window (the Uninstall button can (in most cases) remove it by clicking on the Uninstall button

(installation procedures; those exceptions have been noted.

and go from there. Some of the add-ons described here follow other

much the same, just choose Tools: Themes instead, after you restart Firefox. Adding a new theme is pretty

install Now button. Most extensions take effect only you trust (such as fp.mozilla.org), and click on the extension you want, and then click on the install Now link. Verify that the site hosting the download is one the window. On the page that appears, find the click on the Get More Extensions link at the bottom of

To add an extension, choose Tools: Extensions and URLs where applicable.

follow. See "Hot links" for download favorite sites follow. There are hundreds of free add-dream browser. That make it a power surfer's search engines — that's including themes and alternative other add-ons — including themes and alternative CSS editing, to the browser. Firefox also works with Firefox fans love the browser's features, such as an RSS reader and

let you add all sorts of useful features, such as an RSS reader and

Foxley fans love the browser's extensions — third-party apps that

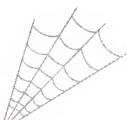
**Extending Firefox**

**Hot Links**

[www.typepad.com](http://www.typepad.com)  
[www.blogspot.com](http://www.blogspot.com)  
[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)  
[www.movabletype.org](http://www.movabletype.org)  
[www.wordpress.org](http://www.wordpress.org)  
 Blogging tools  
[www.shoebox.com.au](http://www.shoebox.com.au)  
 The Shoebox  
[www.lifli.com/Products/iBlog/main.htm](http://www.lifli.com/Products/iBlog/main.htm)  
 Put a blog on your .Mac site  
[sixapart.com/pronet](http://sixapart.com/pronet)  
 Six Apart Professional Network



# The best blogging tools for the Mac



ACCORDING to one recent estimate, a new weblog is created every second. Everyone from your geeky IT co-worker to your Uncle Marvin has one already. So why don't you? If you've got something – anything – you want to share with the rest of the world, a blog is the place to do it. And it's never been easier to jump on the blogging bandwagon. The tools and services required are inexpensive (and often free) and as simple (or as powerful) as you want.

Right now, the blogging tools most popular with Mac users are TypePad and Movable Type, both from Six Apart; Blogspot and Blogger, from Blogger (now part of Google); and WordPress, an open-source tool.

These five tools range in power and complexity from simple-but-limited (TypePad, Blogger, and Blogspot) to do-pretty-much-anything-but-may-require-coding (WordPress). Movable Type is somewhere between these two extremes.

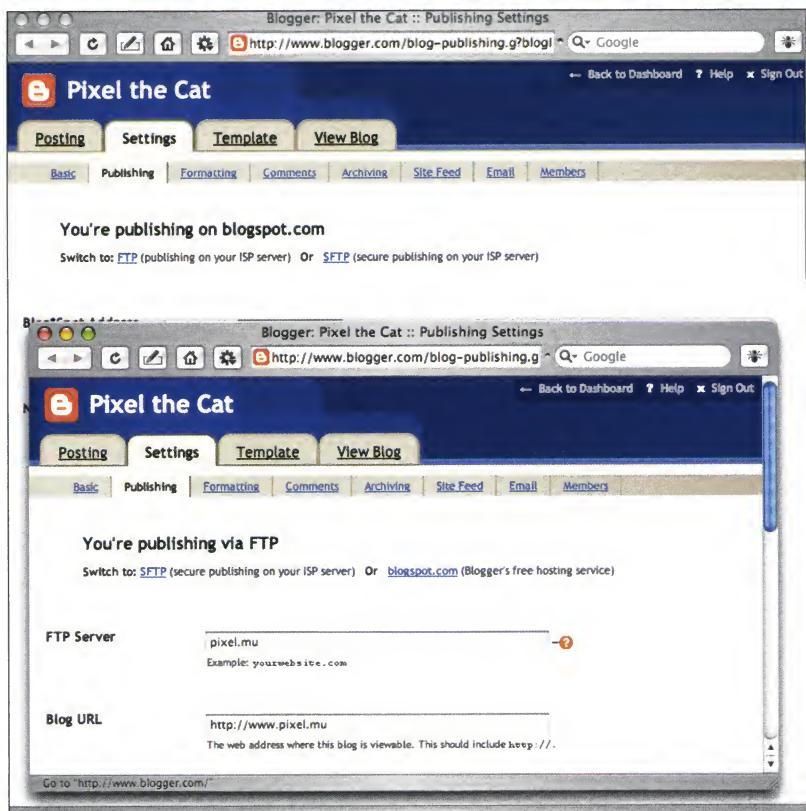
Two of them – TypePad and Blogspot – also provide the hosting services you need in order to put your blog on the web. The other three require that you arrange the hosting yourself (though that's not especially hard to do).

Here are the tools I'd recommend for different sorts of bloggers (see "Hot links" for download URLs).

**Hosts with the most.** If you've never set up and maintained a web page, you may want to start your blogging career with one of the two hosted

services, TypePad or Blogspot. Simply put, this means that your blog will have the address example.typepad.com or example.blogspot.com.

**TypePad.** Of the two, TypePad is more straightforward: with it, you can have a new blog online within a few minutes. Click on a few buttons in your browser, enter your credit card number,



**Blogger upgrade.** To move from Blogspot to Blogger, you just click on the Switch To FTP link and fill out a form.

and choose a design, and your site is live. Even with all that simplicity, TypePad offers some decent extras. It allows readers to comment on your posts, and it lets you categorise your posts by topic (or whatever) for easier navigation. Like all the services mentioned here, it supports XML syndication (so readers can keep track of your blog in their RSS news readers).

TypePad does have drawbacks. For one, it's the only blogging service described here that doesn't offer a free version. You can try it out for 30 days; after that, you'll have to pay \$US5 to \$US15 per month (or \$US50 to \$US150 a year), depending on the service level you choose (Basic, Plus, or Pro), to keep adding to your site. At the Basic level, TypePad is pretty limited unless you know some HTML. For example, its Mixed Media Layout designs look like promising ways to share photos and even video – but you can't use them without learning some HTML tags. The Plus and Pro accounts offer more flexibility and power, letting multiple authors contribute or letting you run multiple blogs yourself. Again, you have to pay for the increased level of service.

**Blogspot.** For a simple solution that doesn't cost money, check out Blogspot. If you just want to enter plain text and upload images, it's got everything you need and doesn't require any HTML knowledge. Just start an account, name your blog, choose a template, and start posting. You can adjust your blog's settings, and you can even tweak its layout (a bit), without digging into any code. To go further, even to do something as simple as change the links in your sidebar from the default ones (links to "Edit Me" are sure signs of a blogging newbie), you'll need to learn some code.

**Serving yourself.** The other three tools (Blogger, Movable Type, and WordPress) let you put your blog on whatever web host you want. The most immediate advantage of this is that you get to use your own domain name, instead of a lengthy URL that includes the name of your service. Beyond that cosmetic effect, using your own host with Movable Type or WordPress means that you're running the blogging software on your own server, not someone else's, so you have complete control over your blog. However, it also means that you'll have to fix problems yourself if any occur. (For more on hosting, see the sidebar "Blogging tips and tricks.")

**Blogger.** Of the three tools that come without hosting, Blogger is by far the simplest. In fact, the only difference between Blogger and Blogspot is Blogspot's hosting service. Otherwise, they supply the same tools for building a blog and posting to it. If you're using Blogspot and want to move to a host of your own, the transition is easy: just click on the Switch To FTP link and fill out a form, and your existing blog will be moved (see the screenshot "Blogger upgrade"). With other blogging tools, you'll need to export and import your posts. Because it's basically identical to Blogspot, without the convenience of the hosting service, Blogger has been waning in popularity lately.

**Movable Type.** Like TypePad, Movable Type costs money. Unlike TypePad, it has a free version that lets you (and only you – no multiple authors) run as many as three blogs; however, the drawback to the free service is that it does not include customer support. The \$US70 Basic version supports as many as five authors and unlimited blogs; the \$US100 package supports unlimited authors and blogs. Note, also, that Movable Type is

## Blogging tools compared

Which Mac blogging tool is right for you? While they'll all get you online without too much trouble, some small (but important) differences set them apart.

HOSTED				NOT HOSTED					
	Blogspot	TypePad Basic	TypePad Plus	TypePad Pro	Blogger	Movable Type	Movable Type Basic	Movable Type Unlimited	WordPress
Comments	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Categories	□	■	■	■	□	■	■	■	■
Full HTML Editing	■	□	□	■	■	■	■	■	■
RSS/Atom Support	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Multiple Blogs	■	□	■	■	■	■	■	■	□
Multiple Authors	■	□	□	■	■	□	■	■	■
Image Uploading	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Automatic Thumbnail Creation	□	■	■	■	□	■	■	■	■
Cost	free	\$US5/month or \$US/year	\$US9/month or \$US90/year	\$US15/month or \$US150/year	free	free	\$US70^	\$US100^	free
Drive Space Provided	■	■	■	■	□	□	□	□	□
Custom Domain Names	□	□	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

■ = yes □ = no. ^Personal licenses terms vary for commercial, educational, and nonprofit licensees.

## Blogging for photographers

If all you want to do is share snapshots, you can use a photo-sharing site such as The Shoebox (see "Hot links"). If you want to supplement those snaps with text, you'll be better off with a photo-friendly blogging tool.

All the major blogging tools will let you show off your photos in a small blog. TypePad delivers a lot for minimal effort (see the screenshot "Online album made easy"). Its album-publishing tool lets you upload a zipped folder of images. The tool then opens the zipped file and puts the images into a folder that you name. It creates thumbnails of each image; you can then go in and add a caption to each photo. Unfortunately, even though Movable Type is related to TypePad, many of these features haven't yet migrated to Movable Type (as of version 3.2, which was just released at press time).

Blogspot and Blogger aren't there yet either. They let you upload a maximum of five images at a time (see the screenshot "Five at a time"), and neither creates thumbnails. WordPress handles photos the same way it handles so much else: with a plug-in. There's a wide variety of choices, so you'll have to experiment and see which one works best for you.



**Blogger: Upload Images**

Add an image from your computer

[Add another image](#)

Choose File  200203051340167.JPG  
 200203051340168.JPG  
 200203051340172.JPG  
 200203051340199.JPG  
 200203051340301.JPG

Choose a layout.

None  Left  Center  Right

Image size:  
 Small  Medium  Large

Use this layout every time?

**Upload Image** **Cancel**

**Online album made easy.**  
All the major blogging tools make it easy to post photos, but TypePad makes it the easiest.

**Five at a time.** If you want to run a photo-centric blog, Blogger and Blogspot don't make it easy: They let you upload only five images at a time.

now offering blog hosting through partners: Pair.com (a well-known hosting company), for example, sells Movable Type blog hosting for \$US6 a month on top of its standard fees. In the long run, it's the most expensive option of them all, but it's by far the simplest if you need a high-end tool.

Whichever license you choose, Movable Type is substantially more powerful than TypePad. While it lets you easily create multiple weblogs (by clicking on Create New Weblog and filling out an online form), it also supports advanced web technologies

such as dynamic publishing. Because it's written in Perl and the source code is available to anyone who wants to play with it, there are many third-party plug-ins that can enhance your site. In part because of that sophistication, initial installation of Movable Type can be difficult, particularly for web newbies.

**WordPress.** By contrast, WordPress is known for its easy setup. At the same time, it's the most powerful of these blogging tools. While WordPress is accessible enough for intermediate bloggers, advanced web authors will really appreciate it.

**Swiss army knife.** Chris Pederick's Web Developer extension gives you all sorts of tools for analysing your web pages.

When you're searching for and using free imagery, keep in mind that you get what you pay for, so you may have to wade through dozens of bland vacation snapshots before you find a real gem. Most free photo sites let contributing photographers define a photo's usage rights: in some cases, you must credit the photographer; in others, commercial use is limited. Make sure to read the fine print on each site and for each photo you want to use.

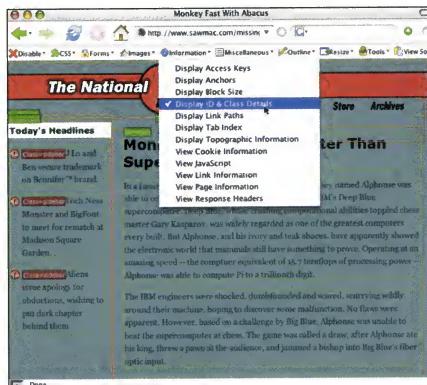
**ASCII-style.** Anyone who remembers daisy-wheel printers knows what ASCII art is about: images created with chunky black letters on white paper. If you're looking for that retro-tech look, check out ASCII Art Made Easy (see "Hot links"). Provide a photo, and this web page can quickly turn it into a series of symbols and letters that simulate the various shades of grey. Squint hard enough, and the results look like the real thing. You can even add a modern touch of colour.

**Building on a budget.** Macromedia Dreamweaver and GoLive may be the reigning champs of web design, but not everyone can afford them. If money is tight, NVU (see "Hot links") is worth a look (see the screenshot "Page design on the cheap"). This open-source program runs on Linux, Windows, and the Mac, and it provides many of the features of an expensive web design application — a WYSIWYG view, word-processor-like text tools, integrated FTP, template support, a CSS (Cascading Style Sheets) editor, and even a spelling checker.

**Online measuring tape.** CSS gives web designers the power to control their page layouts accurately. With pixel-accurate placement, you can dictate where a banner, sidebar, or graphic should be placed on a page.

MeasureIt (see "Hot links"), a Firefox extension by Kevin Freitas, is a simple tool that can help refine your design process. While viewing a page in Firefox, you drag a rectangle across the page — over a graphic, for example. A shaded box appears giving you pixel values for the width and height. It's a helpful diagnostic tool, perfect for making sure your designs add up.

**All-purpose tool.** Web Designers spend a lot of time asking questions: Why doesn't the design look exactly the way I planned it? How will my site look if visitors don't have JavaScript turned on? Is my HTML and CSS code correct? There are many ways to get the answers, but for all-around usefulness, you won't find anything better than the Web Developer extension, by Chris Pederick (see the screenshot "Swiss Army Knife").



This Firefox add-on (see "Hot links") provides countless useful tools for analysing web pages. You can turn off JavaScript to see how a page works without it; add a graphic outline around all block-level elements to quickly identify layout elements on a page; display the size (in pixels) of any block or image on the page; view any cookies currently set for the current web site; make sure all the links on a current page work; validate HTML and CSS; and plenty more. Web Developer belongs in every web designer's toolbox.

**How does it look in Windows?** Mac web designers face the uncomfortable fact that most people browsing the web use Internet Explorer (IE) on Windows computers. Because IE is relatively old and doesn't adhere to the same standards as Safari or Firefox, you'll often find that a design that looks beautiful on your Mac will fall apart on IE for Windows. If you don't have a Windows machine lying around, you can get a little help on the web. Browsershots (see "Hot links") is a free web-based screen-capture tool that lets you see what your web site will look like on different web browsers and operating systems. It can take screenshots of IE 5.5 and 6 for Windows, and it can even take them at different screen resolutions and with different colour depths. Since this is a volunteer effort, you may find that it takes a few hours and sometimes days for your screenshots to be completed. If you've got more money than time, BrowserCam (see "Hot links") provides a commercial alternative.

**Net administrators rejoice.** If you're neck-deep in the web, you probably have to deal with a lot of hassles — registering domain names, making sure your web server is still up-and-running, and fighting spammers. There are plenty of tools available in OS X's Unix core that'll help you with all that. If you want a one-stop shop for much of your web administrivia, check out DNS Stuff (see "Hot links"). There you can find out who owns any domain on the web, whether a mail server (including your own) is listed in a spam database, and many more ways to track down network problems.

**Desk(top) reference.** Keeping up with the web's changing trends and technologies can be a full-time job. You shouldn't have to waste your time looking for the best sources of information. The

Web Developer's Handbook (see "Hot links") is a compact web page loaded with hundreds of links to some of the most useful web-design resources on the web. From design inspiration to the latest technical tips and tricks, you'll find plenty of sites that can make you a better designer. ☀



**Page design on the cheap.** NVU provides many of the features you'll find in more-expensive web apps such as Macromedia Dreamweaver.



### Hot Links

[www.colorschemer.com/online.html](http://www.colorschemer.com/online.html)

Color Schemer Online

[www.wellstyled.com/tools/colorscheme2/index-en.html](http://www.wellstyled.com/tools/colorscheme2/index-en.html)

Color Scheme Generator 2

[www.degraeve.com/color-palette/](http://www.degraeve.com/color-palette/)

Colour palette generator

[www.morguefile.com](http://www.morguefile.com)

[www.sxc.hu](http://www.sxc.hu)

[www.istockphoto.com](http://www.istockphoto.com)

Free (or at least cheap) stock images

[yotophoto.com](http://yotophoto.com)

Find free images on the web

[www.degraeve.com/img2txt.php](http://www.degraeve.com/img2txt.php)

ASCII art

[www.nvu.com](http://www.nvu.com)

Low-cost web slinger

[addons.mozilla.org/extensions/moreinfo.php?id=539](http://addons.mozilla.org/extensions/moreinfo.php?id=539)

MeasureIt

[macworld.com/0803](http://macworld.com/0803)

Wed Developer extension for Firefox

[browsershots.org](http://browsershots.org)

[www.browsercam.com](http://www.browsercam.com)

See how your site will look in Windows

[www.dnsstuff.com](http://www.dnsstuff.com)

All your administrivia in one place

[www.alvit.de/handbook](http://www.alvit.de/handbook)

The Web Developer's Handbook

# The web pro's toolkit



THE open-source revolution has produced plenty of powerful programs for the Mac. It has also provided some of the fundamental – and free – tools that run the web, including Apache (the world's most popular web server) and MySQL (the relational database system that's used by Yahoo, NASA, and a bunch of other huge organisations that could afford to pay for software).

While professional web developers use such big-name open-source applications as Apache, they also freely sample from myriad smaller open-source projects – bulletin-board programs, blogging apps, content-management systems, and other tools available at sites like SourceForge.net.

Professional web developers aren't the only ones who can benefit from software produced (or at least inspired) by the open-source movement. The web is bursting with Mac resources that can help anyone who runs a web site. Here are a few of the best.

**In living colour.** Selecting just the right colours – ones that will enhance your web site's message rather than detract from it – can be a daunting task for any designer. Years of disciplined study and practical experience might make the process easier. For people who need a little push in the right direction, there are several free web tools that help you generate palettes of compatible colours, ranging from the bright and loud to the somber and subdued.

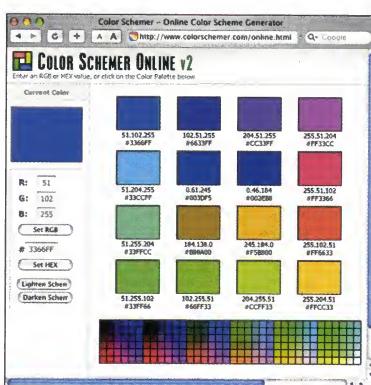
**Does magenta go with puce?** If you're trying to pick colours for your web site, Color Schemer Online can help. Give it one colour, and it'll suggest 15 others that go with it.

Color Schemer Online (see "Hot links") provides a simple interface that lets you select a colour and instantly see 15 other harmonious colours (see the screenshot "Does magenta go with puce?"). Color Scheme Generator 2 (see "Hot links") takes a more scientific and complex approach; it includes tools for viewing monochromatic, contrasting, and analogic colour schemes.

If a photo is providing your inspiration, feed its URL to DeGraeve.com's Color Palette Generator (see "Hot links"). The app will return two colour schemes – a "vibrant" one and a "dull" one – based on the image's colours.

**Inexpensive images.** A picture may be worth a thousand words, but to a designer, free photos may save a thousand bucks. Stock photography can be expensive – it's not uncommon to have to pay a few hundred dollars per image, and that can quickly erode a design budget.

Fortunately, there are plenty of online sources for low-cost or free imagery. MorgueFile (see "Hot links"), for example, organises its collection of free high-resolution photos into simple categories such as Animal, Objects, People, and Still Life. Stock.Xchng (see "Hot links") has a massive selection: more than 150,000 photos. iStockPhoto (see "Hot links") isn't free, but each image costs just \$US1 to \$US3, and the quality of the photos is better than what you'll find at most free sites. And you can search with YotoPhoto (see "Hot links"), a search engine that scours the web for free images.





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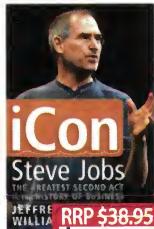


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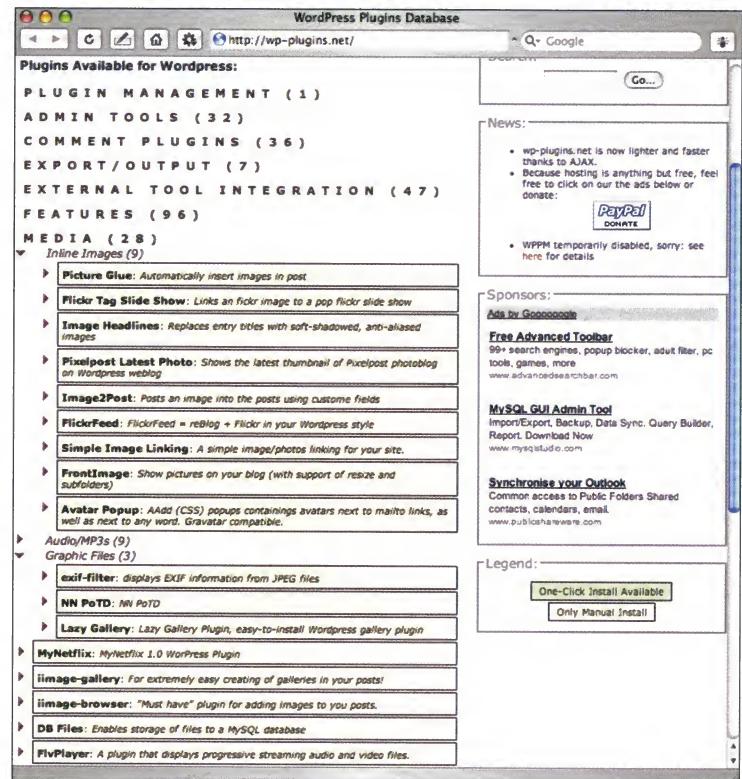
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WordPress is written in PHP and is an open-source app, so its code is freely accessible. An active developer community works constantly to improve and enhance it. If you want something unusual, there's a good chance that somebody has already written it (see the screenshot "WordPress plus"); if not, you're welcome to write it yourself. WordPress's biggest drawback is that if you want to run more than one blog, you'll need to install additional copies of the app. Like so many other open-source tools, WordPress's documentation is in sore need of some volunteer help.

**Get blogging.** In choosing the right blogging tool, it all comes down to what works best for you. Do you just want to dip your toes into the blogging waters? Try Blogspot. It's the perfect (and a very common) place to start, it's free, and, because it's hosted, you don't have to worry about maintaining it. Want more functionality without the hosting pains? Go for one of the paid TypePad accounts. Want to put several blogs on that unused domain name you've had all these years? Try Movable Type. Want to dive into the code and tweak your blog to your heart's content (and help out the open-source community at the same time)? Then you're a WordPress user.

No matter which blogging tool seems best for you, time's a-wasting. In the time you spent reading this article, 600 new blogs were created. ☺



**WordPress plus.** You get more from WordPress when you use one of its dozens of plug-ins. You'll find tools for administering your blog, adding photos and music, and integrating WordPress with other apps.

## Blogging tips and tricks

So you've chosen and downloaded the weblog tool that's right for you, and now you're ready to start blogging. Here are a few pointers to get you started off on the right foot.

> Why can't writing text for a weblog be like writing text in a word processor? If you'd rather just choose styles, such as bold and italic, than remember tags, such as `<strong>` and `<em>`, you can — if your browser will let you. In OS X, you'll need Firefox (see the screenshot "Writing with Movable Type"). All the blogging apps mentioned here offer additional editing tools in Firefox that aren't available in Safari (yet).

> TypePad puts some of its most useful functions in its side-bars, so be sure to check them out. You can create lists of sites, books, music, or photos and add them to your blog's sidebar.

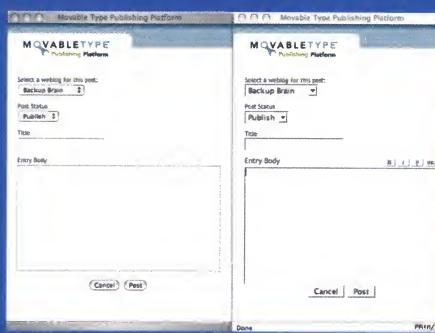
You can also add a calendar of posts and other fun tidbits (such as your iChat status). And you do all this by filling in online forms — no HTML required.

> You don't need your own domain name in order to host your own site with Movable Type or WordPress. You do, however, need an ISP or hosting company that gives you FTP access and the ability to run your own server-side applications. This leaves out .Mac users.

If you want a blog on your .Mac account, check out iBlog, from Lifli Software (see "Hot links").

> Want the convenience of hosting but also want to use your own domain name? TypePad's two higher levels of service (Plus and Pro) let you do domain mapping — your site is on TypePad's servers, but anyone can get to it by entering your domain name or surfing to your site. I know some very technology-savvy people who have chosen TypePad because they don't want to have to worry about regularly installing the latest software fixes — they've found that letting Six Apart deal with those headaches is worth the annual fee. If you modify the templates and use your own domain name, people might not even realise that you're using TypePad.

> A personal license for two people to jointly author a single non-commercial Movable Type weblog starts at \$US70. Instead of purchasing that license, consider the Six Apart Professional Network (see "Hot links"). It's free to join, and it comes with a free commercial license.



**Writing with Movable Type.** In Firefox (right), Movable Type provides text-style buttons. In Safari (left), it doesn't.



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By Dan Warne.

**Hot Links**

[pimpmysafari.com/](http://pimpmysafari.com/)  
 Pimp my Safari blog  
[haoli.dnsalias.com/Saft](http://haoli.dnsalias.com/Saft)  
 Saft  
[culater.net/software/PithHelmet/PithHelmet.php](http://culater.net/software/PithHelmet/PithHelmet.php)  
 PithHelmet  
[www.atamadison.com/w/kitzkikz.php?page=Sogudi](http://www.atamadison.com/w/kitzkikz.php?page=Sogudi)  
 Sogudi  
[www.bti.net/concierge/index.php](http://www.bti.net/concierge/index.php)  
 Concierge  
[batista.org/extender.html](http://batista.org/extender.html)  
 Safari Extender  
[www.lordofthecows.com/safari\\_enhancer.php](http://www.lordofthecows.com/safari_enhancer.php)  
 Safari Enhancer

## Make Safari foxier

**F**IREFOX, the open-source web browser from the Mozilla Foundation, has captured the imagination of tech enthusiasts everywhere. It runs on Mac, Linux and Windows (as well as other, lesser-known operating systems), which means you can have the same browser at home and at work, regardless of the computers you're forced to work on.

The killer feature that has most people hooked on the 'fox is its ability to take on new functions through third-party extensions. This extension architecture has done for Firefox's popularity what the plethora of plug-in music transmitters, remote controls, external speakers and other gizmos did for cementing the iPod's pre-eminence.

There are some incredibly useful extensions:

**Adblock** allows you to nix banner ads (you can define your own rules by right clicking on banner ads and blocking URLs or parts of them, or simply download someone else's list of ad servers);

**FlashGot** lets you integrate third party download managers with Firefox;

**PDFView** lets you decide what to do when you click on a PDF file online — save it, print it, view it in the browser or open it in an external program.

That's just three personal favourites out of hundreds available, which have blossomed into all sorts of areas such as iTunes controller tool-bars, weather forecasts in Firefox's status bar and even the ability to send SMSs through an installable toolbar.

The problem with Firefox, though, is that it's a little sluggish on Mac. Because its code base has been designed to run on numerous operating systems, it lacks some of the optimisations that Apple has been able to build into Safari.

The Firefox development team is working on fixing that, with a new version of Firefox — 1.5, codenamed Deer Park — which promises to improve performance specifically on Mac.

**Foxing up Safari.** The good news for Safari devotees is that although it isn't designed with quite the same extensible architecture as Firefox, it does have a plug-in system, and there are some fine add-ons out there. There's also a whole web site devoted to Safari add-ons, called Pimp My Safari (see "Hot links"), ironically by Jon Hicks, the brilliant designer who created the striking icon for Firefox.

One of the best Safari add-ons is **Saft**. It includes an ad-blocker that works the same sort of way as the Firefox AdBlock extension — you right-click (or control-click if your Mighty Mouse hasn't arrived yet) on an ad and define a blocking rule. For example, if the URL that comes up for the ad is <http://mysite.com/bannerads/ad>

720x200.gif, you could block \*/bannerads/\*.

**SAFT** also adds other helpful things like the ability to define short names for web sites (just type APL into the address bar to go to [www.apple.com](http://www.apple.com)) reorderable tabs and crash protection, which reopens Safari with all the pages you had open if it crashes.

The downside of SAFT's ad blocking protection is that you can't import other people's blocklists of adserver URLs at this stage.

A dedicated ad-blocker called **PithHelmet** is another old favourite. It costs \$US10 and can import Firefox Adblock lists. It doesn't offer the additional functions of SAFT, though.

You can extend Safari's search box with a number of add-ons.

**Sogudi** lets you search a bunch of popular web sites like Amazon.com, IMDB, VersionTracker, Google Images and many more using a keyword prefix (rather than the considerably more time consuming method of pulling down the drop-down menu).

Another search tool, **AcidSearch**, adds some helpful extra options to Safari's Google Search dropdown, like "Google this site".

**Concierge** is an add-on bookmark drawer for Safari that lets you search through your bookmarks using instant Spotlight-like search technology.

There's also a bunch of tweaking tools that can unlock some of the functionality of Safari that Apple created but decided not to expose to the public.

**Safari Extender** allows you to save all open tabs as a tab set and temporarily turn images off for speedier browsing, among other features.

**Safari Enhancer** gives you access to Safari's Debug menu, which allows you to fiddle with Apple's settings yourself — including modifying Safari's cache settings to remember your browsing history for more or fewer days.

**Danger, Will Robinson.** Although Apple has included a rudimentary plug-in engine for Safari, it hasn't promoted its use to developers. As a result, Safari's developers don't make any effort to ensure plug-ins keep working between Safari updates.

Often, even a minor update to Safari will break all the plugins — and if the conflict between the plug-in and Safari is bad enough, it will prevent Safari from loading. You'll have to download new versions of your plug-ins frequently.

Given the success of Dashboard and Firefox heavily on community add-ons — hopefully Apple will soon make "foxing up Safari" a more mainstream activity!

**Dan Warne** is passionate about the state of broadband in Australia.

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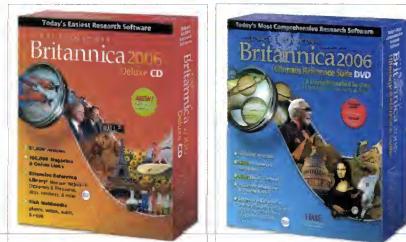
Bluetooth Stereo Audio Streaming Ready. Works with iPods, desktop computers, laptops and most other audio devices using an earphone jack. • Syncs with Bluetooth-enabled mobile phones so you can easily switch from listening to music to taking an incoming call. See our site for more info.



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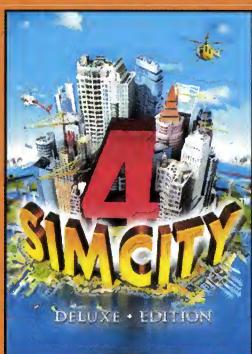
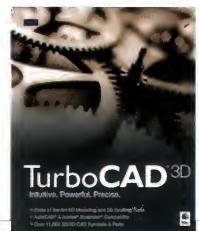
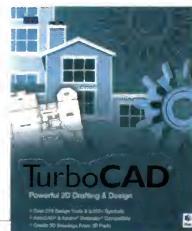
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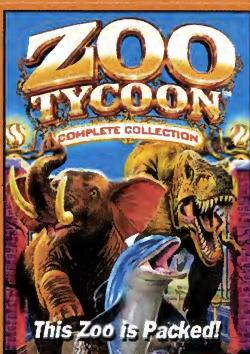
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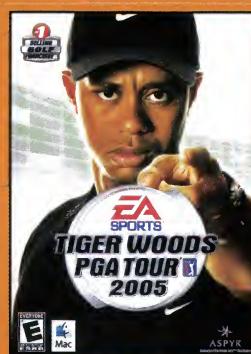
**SimCity 4 Deluxe Edition**  
Due October – \$72.95



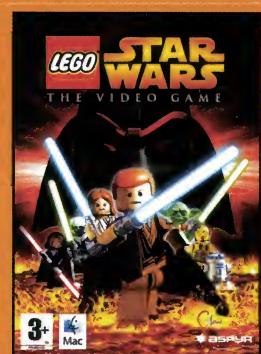
**Zoo Tycoon Complete Coll.**  
Now Shipping – \$64.95



**RollerCoaster Tycoon 3**  
Due November – \$64.95



**Tiger Woods 2005**  
Now Shipping – \$59.95



**Lego Star Wars**  
Now Shipping – \$44.95

E&OE. Prices and specifications subject to change without notice. Prices do not include delivery. Items available separately – not as a pack.

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# The Hub

YOUR DIGITAL LIFESTYLE

## PRINT PICS ONLINE

**How to choose a PDA  
Up close with Sibelius  
Pro File: Paul Tuersley,  
effects guru**

Extrafilm

Upload Photos Step 1 of 4

Select the photos you want printed by clicking the **Select** button and then click **Next Step**.

Step 2: Choose size

Step 3: Choose photo

Step 4: Order photos

Extrafilm Image Selector and Uploader [Help?]

Step 1: Select the photos you want printed by clicking the **Select** button and then click **Next Step**.

Step 2: Choose size

Step 3: Choose photo

Step 4: Order photos

Print@FUJICOLOR

Quick Print - Standard Upload

Step 1 - Choose the number of files to upload

Step 2 - Choose the photographs you want to upload by pressing the Browse button

Step 3 - Are you finished? Press the upload button

Step 4 - PLEASE BE PATIENT.

Upload 10 files at once

Select the photos to upload

Step 4 - PLEASE BE PATIENT.

Connection Speeds

Estimated Time

ADSL - 1500/256

ADSL - 512/128

approx 35 seconds

approx 43 seconds

Helpful Hints

Hint 1:

You may have a maximum of 48 images. Image size must be less than 3.5MB per image.

Hint 2:

At present only photos in JPEG (.JPG) format can be uploaded. JPEG offers good compatibility with most digital cameras, and good balance of high quality photos and file compression.

My Shoe Box

Order Prints from The Shoe Box

Secure Connection

Quick Order

6x4" 110x150mm Print Gloss

White Borders

Sub Total \$ 0.00

Shipping Australia Post (\$3.95)

Total \$ 11.95

Please upload only JPEG files.

Choose File

E-mail address:

Language:

FROG PRINTS

GREAT DIGITAL PHOTOS MADE EASY

ORDER PHOTOS

1 UPLOAD Images

2 SELECT Quantity & Size

STEP 2) SELECT Quantity & Size

Show thumbnails on order page ✓

To force all the pictures to one size and quantity here and press the "Set all" button. Otherwise select details for each image then click on RECALCULATE

Add another size

Select Quantity

Thumbnail	Image Name (pixel size)	Selected Size	Select Quantity
	IMG_1895.JPG - (3072 x 2048)	8x12"	<input type="button" value="Add another size"/>
	img036.jpg - (2128 x 3336)	6x8" (Med Digital)	<input type="button" value="Add another size"/>
	img087.jpg - (2004 x 3152)	6x8" (Med Digital)	<input type="button" value="Add another size"/>
	img145.jpg - (1686 x 1178)	6x8" (Med Digital)	<input type="button" value="Add another size"/>
	img239.jpg - (2112 x 3232)	6x8" (Med Digital)	<input type="button" value="Add another size"/>
	img191.jpg - (2048 x 1536)	6x8" (Med Digital)	<input type="button" value="Add another size"/>

By Philip Luces

	Afghanet	Extrafilm	Frog Prints	Fujicolor
<b>Hot links</b>	<a href="http://www.agfaphoto.com">www.agfaphoto.com</a>	<a href="http://www.extrafilm.com.au">www.extrafilm.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.frogprints.com.au">www.frogprints.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.fujicolor.com.au">www.fujicolor.com.au</a>
<b>Phone number</b>	1300 364 817	07 5509 7979	1800 190 052	1800 226 355
<b>Ordering Options</b>	Web browser	Web browser	Web browser	Web browser
<b>Payment Options</b>	Visa, Mastercard	Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard	Visa, Mastercard, American Express	Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard, American Express
<b>4x6 print cost</b>	Varies (\$0.40 - \$0.49)	\$0.25	\$0.49	\$0.49
<b>5x7 print cost</b>	Varies (\$0.95 - \$3.95)	\$0.33	\$1.95	\$1.99
<b>6x8 print cost</b>	Varies (\$1.25 - \$4.95)	\$1.50	\$4.95 <sup>1</sup>	\$3.45
<b>8x10 print cost</b>	Varies (\$3.95 - \$9.95)	\$3.00	\$9.95 <sup>1</sup>	\$6.25
<b>8x12 print cost</b>	Varies (\$4.95 - \$10.95)	\$3.00	\$10.95 <sup>1</sup>	\$6.25
<b>Delivery Options</b>	Varies - Pick Up, Standard Mail, Express Mail, Courier	Pick Up (from Southport, Qld) Standard Mail, Express Mail	Standard Mail	Pick Up, Standard Mail
<b>Max upload</b>	None	6MB per file/60MB total	100 images per upload	48 images/3.5MB per image

<sup>1</sup>Discounts for orders of five or more, <sup>2</sup>Discounts for orders of ten or more

## Photo labs go online

In this section of The Hub, I like to put a lot of control into your hands with how you take and collect your pictures and how you end up printing them — printers, cameras and even scanners that'll help you get the most out of your creativity, and on your own terms.

However, there are times when you want to go to the professionals to get your images printed. There are several ways to get your own images (both digital or film) printed at a professional lab. There are many photo labs that enable you to just plug your memory cards into a standalone device and print your photos that way, without needing any lab assistance at all.

What happens when you want to review all your images and pick out the ones you want so that they can be printed? You could sit there, pick them out, and then transfer them to a memory card — or you could just do it all online. Online photo printing service providers have massively advanced their technology in the last few years and the options available are wide and varied.

One caveat before you start uploading images from your Mac to an online photo lab: make sure you have broadband. While JPEG compression can help you to get the size of your images down and you can upload images as small as 1024x768, you really are limited to the size of print you can get from that, usually 4x6 inches. If you want get larger prints of a reasonable quality, your images will have to be roughly 1MB each or more. When you start uploading more than a few, the bandwidth requirements start to add up. As anyone who's tried to upload (or download) large files over dial-up will attest, there are reliability problems that could have you redialling a number of times.

**Before you start.** No matter how good your online print service actually is, if the source material is not good you will never get a great-looking image. Simple as that. You have to be your own harshest critic when it comes to assessing your photos, particularly when you're looking to fork out cash for some of the larger sizes and special options you might like to take up. That said, there are some things you can do which will improve your chances of getting great prints.



**Value option.** When it's working, Extrafilm's photo uploading is simple to use. And it's cheap.

First of all, optimise your pics as best you can, whether that means running through your photos through the quick-and-dirty tools in iPhoto or professional sprucing in Photoshop. Then, if needed, crop. Quite often a good photograph is marred by the main subject being off to the edge of the frame. There's nothing worse than a photo that has loads of dead space around your subjects that doesn't actually add anything to the final image.

Finally, pick a compression level that maintains as much image quality as possible. Generally speaking, all these online photo labs only accept JPEGs, so when you're saving your pics, try to keep the compression quality high, and be sure to compare your final pic with the original. If you've lost too much detail, start again.

**Getting them online.** In terms of ease of use, you simply can't go past the service provided by The Shoe Box. One of the main pluses to using Shoe Box's service is that it provides a plug-in for iPhoto that allows you to simply order your prints using iPhoto's interface. Simply click the Order Prints button and a menu drops down so you can choose what type and size of print you want. Shoe Box even provides a number of different media types, including a metallic

Kodak	MyPrint	Photobugs	Shoe Box
www.kodak.com.au	www.myprint.com.au	www.photobugs.com.au	www.shoebox.com.au
1800 267 588	02 9493 9067	1300 305 239	07 5539 8653
Web browser	Web browser	Web Browser	Web Browser, iPhoto plug-in
Visa or Mastercard	Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard, American Express, Diners	Visa, Mastercard	Bankcard, Visa, Mastercard, American Express
\$0.59	\$0.75	\$0.80 (standard), \$1.20 (premium) <sup>2</sup>	\$0.40
\$4.95	\$3	N/A	\$2.00
N/A	\$4.00	\$5.00 (premium only)	\$3.50
\$7.95	\$7.00	\$8.00 (premium only)	\$7.00
N/A	\$10.00	N/A	\$8.00
Pick Up, Standard Mail	Standard Mail, Express Mail	Standard	Standard Mail, Express Mail, Courier, Pickup (Gold Coast)
100 images	12MB total	None stated	200MB as default

surface print (\$12 for an 8x12-inch print, larger available), canvas poster (all the way up to A0 size) and matte posters (up to 20x30 inch size). Click the Shipping Info button to add your address details, and you're away to go. If all goes well, you can get your prints ordered without touching a web browser.

I did encounter a problem using my credit card via the iPhoto ordering system. I then used another credit card and still got the same error message, so I had to end up using the browser option to get my prints ordered. Fortunately, because I'd already set up a username and password for Shoe Box, my photos were already uploaded — all I had to do was enter the pay details through Shoe Box's secure payments system.

As for the other online photo labs, the interfaces were quite similar. Most sites provide a simple web interface that allows you to upload your photos one at a time. There were some sites, including Shoe Box, Extrafilm and Kodak, that had a java-based multiple-upload capability, enabling you to simply browse the images on your Mac and select a number of them for upload. Other sites, such as Frog Prints, also had a multiple-upload feature, but only an ActiveX applet for PCs running Windows.

Of all the multiple-upload sites, only Extrafilm caused me any problems, though that was because it was sometimes difficult to figure out when it had finished downloading sometimes. Still, apart from that, most of the sites worked flawlessly. All the one-at-a-time upload sites — Agfanet, Fujicolor, MyPrint, Frog Prints and Photobugs — gave no problems at all.

Of all the online print labs, I only have a little gripe with Kodak's. While its service worked flawlessly first time, it took ages to find it. In fact, when I first saw Kodak's site, I didn't think it supported Macs. It wasn't until I followed a link to the Windows-only Print@Kodak software page, and went to the very bottom of the page, that I found out it was possible to use a standard web browser if you're using a Mac. This is particularly sad since, when I first looked at online photo printing services (AMW, 12.2003), Kodak indicated that it would shortly bring out a Mac version of its Print@Kodak software.

**Service with a smile.** One of the interesting things about these online photo labs is the way in which the services are structured. For instance, services such as those through Agfanet, Fujicolor and Kodak are essentially centralised systems that enable users to pick where their photos are actually processed. One of the upsides to doing this, depending on which service you use, is you can try to pick the closest to your delivery address. This means you can even pop into those locations and pick them up yourself. Even some of the non-centralised services, including Extrafilm and The Shoe Box (both located in Queensland), allow you to pick up your prints from their premises.

Still, if you want your prints delivered, Frog Prints, Fujicolor and Kodak offer only standard mail as an option. If you want your prints quicker, go with Extrafilm and MyPrint, which offer Express Post delivery, or perhaps even Shoe Box and Agfanet, which can provide courier services. Bear in mind, however, there are restrictions on where prints can be couriered. In particular, with Agfanet, where prints can get couriered is entirely dependent on where you end up getting your

**Wherever you are.** Fujicolor offers a central interface for connecting to an extensive network of photo labs that you can pick prints up from, if you like.

The screenshot shows the Print@FUJICOLOR website's "Quick Print - Standard Upload" interface. At the top, there's a logo for Print@FUJICOLOR. Below it, a green bar contains the title and a "Helpful Hints" section. The main area has three steps: Step 1 - Choose the number of files to upload (set to 10), Step 2 - Choose the photographs you want to upload by pressing the Browse button (listing several JPEG files), and Step 3 - Are you finished? Press the upload button. A note says "Upload may take some time depending on your internet connection." Below this is a "PLEASE BE PATIENT" message with a progress bar. To the right, there's a "Connection Speeds" table and an "Estimated Time" table. The Connection Speeds table includes ADSL, ADSL 512/128, ADSL 256/64, and Dialup entries. The Estimated Time table shows corresponding upload times for each speed. A note at the bottom states: "Uploading 1 MegaByte of images will approximately take the time listed in the table below".

Connection Speeds	Estimated Time
ADSL - 1500/256	approx 35 seconds
ADSL - 512/128	approx 43 seconds
ADSL - 256/64	approx 2 minutes 20 seconds
Dialup - 56K	5 minutes

**More than just printing.** The friendly web-based interface for Shoe Box's excellent photo processing service.

prints done. Each location offers different options (and prices), so search through your selections carefully.

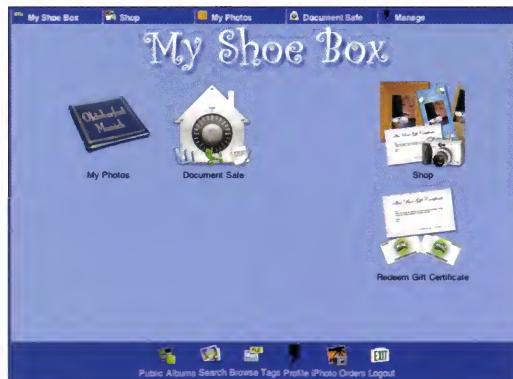
Although I had no problems with most of the sites, I failed to get a confirmation e-mail from Shoe Box — I had got one from most of the other sites (except Kodak and Photobugs) — when I placed our order. When I put through a query about it, I didn't get a response for a number of days — they were changing servers, apparently — but the order came through promptly anyway. The staff were apologetic, and clearly the system still works even when there are problems, so our experience with using Shoe Box was still very solid.

Perhaps one of the more pleasant things to turn up among our prints was a free magnetic frame for pinning a photo to your fridge that came from Frog Prints. Also part of that package came a couple of extra fridge magnets (telling you what to do if you want to process your photos with them). While it was a very small gesture, it was much appreciated and better than anything everybody else sent.

Unfortunately, not all the service we received was that good. Photobugs took a long time to get photos us, and sadly MyPrint's prints got delayed when the Express Post envelope was placed in a standard post office box — Australia Post has a special sticker for this — so my prints did not arrive until well after standard mail would've gotten it to me.

**Tell 'em the price, son.** One of the things that struck me about this comparison of online photo lab services was the enormous range of prices you might expect to pay for a set of prints. By way of comparison, I opted to get a number of 5x7-inch prints from each provider to see both how much they cost and the quality of the prints I'd receive. The most remarkable thing was how inexpensive Extrafilm was. Its service was so cheap that I was able to grab two 8x12-inch prints (only \$5 each) as well as the 10 5x7 inch prints (at 33 cents each) for less than it cost to get just 10 5x7 prints from the other providers.

A very weird consequence of Agfanet's approach to using individual photo labs to provide its service is that each photo lab charges its own prices. For instance, when ordering from one lab in Melbourne, the cost of a 5x7 print was \$3.95, while another Melbourne-based lab only charged 95 cents for the same size of print. Clearly, your mileage may vary. Fujicolor, Frog Prints and Shoe Box all charged roughly the same for a 5x7 print (around \$2), but differed when it came to larger prints, with Fujicolor and Shoe Box being the preferred options in terms of cost. That said, however, Frog Prints does offer discounts for prints larger than 5x7 if you get five or more prints of that size. Also, the more prints you order, the bigger the discount.



Photobugs doesn't offer a 5x7 print size. If you want something a bit larger than the normal 4x6 print, you have to go up to a 6x8 print (and pay \$5 for each of them). That said, however, the 4x6 prints can be as cheap as 36 cents each if you order in quantities over ten. Also, Photobugs offers a Premium service, which does increase the price, but helps to optimise the quality of your final prints.

MyPrint was a bit more costly, charging \$3 for a 5x7 print, but the most expensive service provider, without a doubt, was

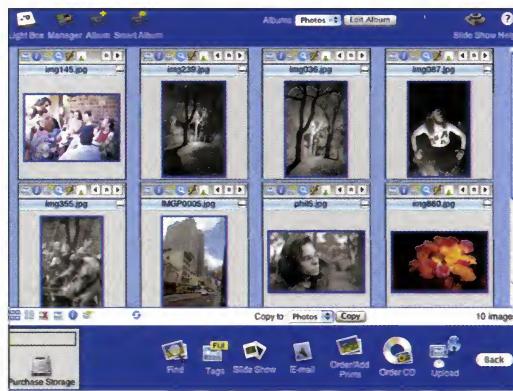
Kodak, which charges \$4.95 for a 5x7 print. With Kodak's pick-up service, there are more options depending on where you get your prints processed, but if you want your prints delivered to your door, then there are only three print sizes to choose from (4x6, 5x7 and 8x10) and they're all processed out of the same location.

**What's in a print?** In terms of individual print quality, there wasn't much separating this group of online photo labs. Generally speaking, any black and white images that you're interested in getting printed are well handled.

When it came to colour, the only provider we had any reservations about was Extrafilm. Considering how inexpensive these prints are, it's not surprising that Extrafilm's prints aren't of the very best quality. We tended to find that there was a slight pixelation that would creep in with these photos that just wasn't in any of the prints from the other providers and wasn't apparent in the original digital files. Still, at 33 cents for a 5x7 print, it's not too bad.

Prints from the Fujicolor print service were very good, and just a little above the rest, but it's important to remember that the prints you'll get are dependent on the processor you get it done with. Fujicolor was followed closely by both Shoe Box and Frog Prints, which are centralised processing services, so these are a good bet if you're looking for a regular processor. Agfanet and MyPrint offer very good image quality, though if you're going through Agfanet you should check which photo lab you'll be using — some are cheaper or closer than others.

Trailing behind a little bit was Kodak, which did produce good prints, and handled colours very well. Some photos weren't quite as vibrantly coloured as those from other photo lab services, but clarity and tonal range were still very good. Photobugs did produce some solid prints, but weren't quite up to the level of the other photo processors.



**The last word.** There are many options available to you, so take the time explore all these photo lab services to find the one that's right for you. ☺

**iLife drawing.** Shoe Box has a downloadable plug-in for iPhoto which allows you to order your prints directly through iPhoto itself.



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- \* Transfer the chapters of the bible to your iPod
- \* Find song lyrics and upload to your iPod
- \* Share your iPod music with everyone in your home, office or the web
- \* Download the latest news, weather and other information to your iPod
- \* Manage, subscribe and download podcasts
- \* Take any document or web page and convert it into a MP3 / AAC track
- \* Find and download driving directions to your iPod
- \* Manage contacts, notes and all other iPod extras
- \* Create your own iPod text games or stories
- \* Modify and/or replace all the graphics or fonts on your iPod

\* Microsoft Windows 98SE, ME, 2000 & XP  
\* Apple Mac OS 9.x, OS X 10.2.x, OS X 10.3.x & OS X 10.4.x

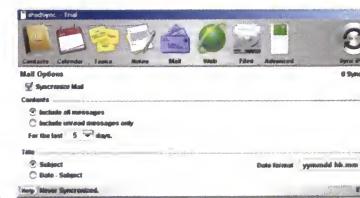
Also there are demonstrations of various titles, including :  
an iPod based mixed drinks and food recipe database with over 100 recipes combined, a language translator for the iPod, a few sets of professional exercise routines made by an ACE certified personal trainer and a iPod "notes" based digital purse accessory.

For a bit of fun included is the world's first webcomics viewer and over five trivia games to upload to your iPod.

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Adobe® Creative Suite 2 Pr from CS1	\$899	Adobe® Type Manager Del OS9 Mac	\$119	Macromedia® Director (from 8.5+)	\$599	Stuffit Deluxe	\$ 59
Adobe® Dimension	\$149	QuarkXpress® v3 to v6.5	\$775	Macromedia® Dreamweaver® 8	\$299	Suitcase	\$ 88
Adobe® Framemaker - UNIX	\$495	QuarkXpress® v4 to v6.5	\$595	Macromedia® Flash Pro 8	\$479	TechTool Pro XGrade	\$ 99
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Our web site is constantly undergoing changes, so be sure you keep checking back for all of your latest software pricing and web specials.

All prices subject to change without notice - E&OE

By David Holloway

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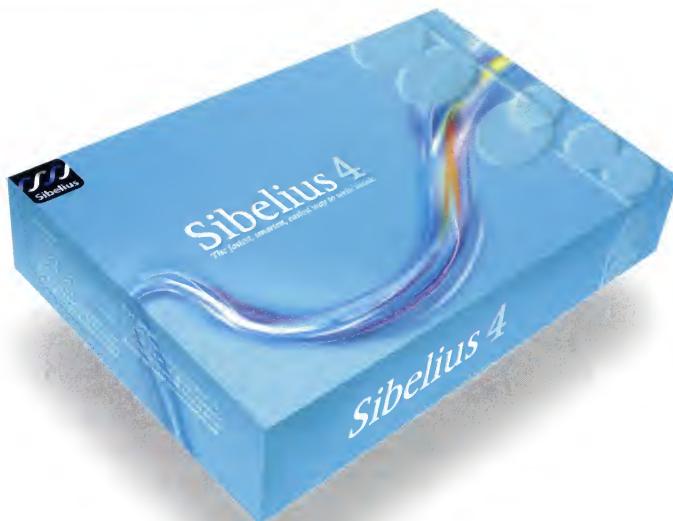
Jean Sibelius — Finland's voice in the world

## Sibelius 4 at first glance

**V**ERSION 4 of Sibelius does indeed have a range of new features. If you've never used a dedicated scoring package before (which I hadn't), the feature set can actually be quite intimidating. That said, the manual is well written and covers in detail how to get started. I did find getting Sibelius to recognise my MIDI keyboard a little tedious, but OS X's MIDI setup made it much easier.

As far as the new features go, the standouts for me were the two mentioned by Ben Finn (see the sidebar "Up close with Mr Sibelius"): dynamic notation and video integration. For any Sibelius user regularly printing off parts for distribution to a choir, band or orchestra, the dynamic notation is nothing short of a godsend. The time this feature would save the intensive user may alone justify the upgrade price. For film, game and TV composers, the video integration means that a step has been taken out of the composition process where other applications would have had to be used separately and then the MIDI data imported into Sibelius.

You can cut and paste notation created in Sibelius 4 into Microsoft Word. There are eleven new plug-ins, over 1700 worksheets able to be completed on your Mac or in hard copy, and Quartz compatibility — which makes viewing intricate scores that much easier. Scores are what Sibelius is primarily about. With Sibelius and some regular music education, you can pick up some serious music knowledge and create your own compositions at the same time. You don't even need any external sound sources — Sibelius comes with its own and will



also happily utilise QuickTime's standard sound set. What stands out across the board with this application is the attention to detail and the education focus.

Sibelius 4 needs a Mac that can run OS X 10.2.8 or later (10.4 recommended) and has 256MB RAM and 250MB of hard disk space available. Owners of previous versions can upgrade for \$399 (full upgrade), \$269 (education), \$169 (tertiary student) or \$99 (secondary student). If it's your first time buying Sibelius it will cost you \$895 (professional), \$495 (for teachers or schools), \$395 (tertiary students) \$295 (secondary students). Extras like PhotoScore Pro, Kontakt Player Gold and the Sibelius education products can be purchased at a discount if bought in conjunction with Sibelius.

Want to know more? Sibelius Australia can be contacted on 08 8277 1722. ☎

## Up close with Mr Sibelius

Co-creator of Sibelius Ben Finn was in Australia for the launch of version 4 and *AMW* had the chance to have a chat with him.

*What are the latest and greatest features in Sibelius 4?*

There are a few features that are significant with this upgrade.

Dynamic notation is one of the big ones. What it allows you to do is easily update all the parts that form the score on the fly. It saves a lot of time to say the least. Video integration is the second one. We're the first notation application to have that. The feedback has been excellent. Alf Clausen, who scores for *The Simpsons*, is using the video integration and is very happy with it. It's also designed to help out education users. Video clips are provided with the application so that students can create scores. Or they can download a movie trailer and score to it. Education is one of our biggest markets and we want to make the teacher's job as easy as possible in the classroom. We've also made a number of minor enhancements as with any version update. Things like Quartz graphics being applied to our scores.

*What are your plans for the future evolution of Sibelius?*

We don't know yet (laughs). Essentially we always look at what we can improve and we'll continue to go down that path.

*Sibelius recently bought out its Australian distributor. Is this a business model you intend on adopting worldwide?*

No, we don't have any plans beyond what we've done in Australia. We have large offices [in the UK and USA] and Australia is then our next largest operation. It just made sense to coordinate distribution from a central point here.

*Do you plan to have a version of Sibelius to coincide with the release of Mac hardware on the Intel platform next year?*

We do.

*So you've already started work on that?*

Yes, it's not going to require a major re-development actually. We may just release a minor update at the time.

*Do you think you'll continue to support the PowerPC platform in the foreseeable future?*

Yes, it won't be hard to do that.

**Hot Links**

[www.macosxhints.com/article.php?story=20050123205848370](http://www.macosxhints.com/article.php?story=20050123205848370)

Store your library on a networked volume.

[www.dougsscripts.com/itunes/itinfo/ituneslibrarymanager.php](http://www.dougsscripts.com/itunes/itinfo/ituneslibrarymanager.php)

Manage multiple iTunes libraries.

[homepage.mac.com/oligrob/syncOtunes/syncOtunes.html](http://homepage.mac.com/oligrob/syncOtunes/syncOtunes.html)

Synchronise two iTunes libraries.

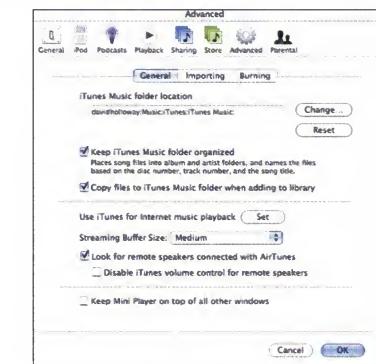
## Juggling iTunes libraries

**A** MONTH or so ago we had a reader (Tom from Annandale, NSW) ask about options for utilising multiple libraries within iTunes. An obvious response to this question would be "Why bother? You use playlists to separate your music preferences". This is true for most of us, but what if you have extremely large libraries of music that could even exceed your hard-drive's capacity? In Tom's case he has more than 170GB of music. One library can become problematic when you get to that level. So, here are a couple of options:

**Network it.** If the issue is purely hard drive size, then store your library on a networked volume. To do this:

1. Copy your entire iTunes Music folder to a networked (or FireWire) drive.
2. Go to iTunes Preferences and click on the Advanced tab.
3. Click on the Change button to the right of the section showing where your current iTunes music folder is stored. Select the new location that your music is stored at. (`itunes.tiff`)
4. relaunch iTunes, and it will load that library.

If you choose to have another library located on your local drive, you can use that as well if your external drive is not connected —



iTunes should default to the local location. There is a useful discussion thread on the issue worth checking out on Mac OS X Hints (see "Hot links"), including other options you can explore with libraries.

**Hack it.** If you really do need multiple libraries on one volume, there are solutions available. If you've heard of Doug's AppleScripts before, you'll know what an invaluable resource it is for everything iTunes (see "Hot links"). Founder Doug Adams has created an AppleScript called iTunes Library Manager. What it does is allow you to create backups of libraries — each backup contains that library's preference files, Via the iTunes AppleScript menu you can load and save libraries anytime you like, in any location you like. The obvious downside is that very large libraries will take some time to load or save.

There is also a very useful application for synchronising two iTunes libraries on different Macs — Sync-O-Tunes. All you need to do is select the library that has the most songs in it, then select the other library. Sync-O-Tunes creates a Music folder on each of your Macs, with all the songs found in both folders. Sync-O-Tunes is a free download and at time of writing was at version 0.95. ↗

## Poly Evolver

**M**OST people who make music (or just about anything else) on their Macs will have a wish list of what they'd love to own if money was no object. For me, this is it: the Poly Evolver Keyboard (PEK). It has been created by Dave Smith, who designed the Prophet series of synthesisers in the late '70s and early '80s and was also the driving force behind the creation of the MIDI standard (he actually coined the term).

The keyboard itself looks like a throwback to the classic synthesisers — it has 77 knobs and 59 switches that give you control over an enormous range of sound options. Without going into deep synthesiser jargon, the keyboard has four oscillators — each oscillator creates its own sounds, and then all four can be combined for some seriously interesting results. Each oscillator can have different effects assigned to it and be assigned to separate sequencers. The big advantage over original analogue synths is the addition of a full digital signal processing chain — no noise aside from the type you are creating. The keyboard itself is five octaves and is semi-weighted. It has full velocity sensitivity and aftertouch — something that you notice when experimenting with some of the sounds. Slight



pressure variations when you press and hold a key are reflected in what you hear. There is full MIDI implementation including the ability to dump new waveforms via MIDI. A software editor is available if you want to tweak sounds from your Mac, although the whole point if the PEK is the tactile experience of creating or altering sounds on the fly.

If you do want to splurge out on a piece of gear that will give you an arsenal of sonic options, then explore the PEK. It's not the only retro-styled synth out there, but the attention to detail makes it a standout option. The Poly-Evolver keyboard retails for \$4299 and the Australian Distributor is Audio Chocolate 03 9813 5877. ↗

**Hot Links**

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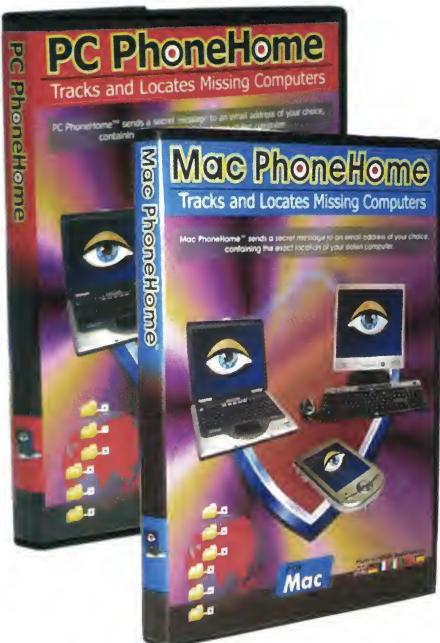
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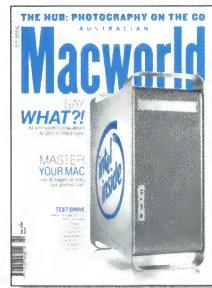
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By Anthony Caruana

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Apple PDA and phone compatibility list

## Buying a PDA



**B**UYING a PDA can be a confusing task even for an experienced technophile. There's a constantly moving feast of features, operating systems and form factors — and when you throw in the increased functionality on many mobile phones you'll end up questioning whether a handheld is even the right decision.

Despite the religious war that rages between Windows Mobile and Palm zealots, both have the good and bad points. Palm OS supports basic multitasking, such as having an MP3 play while you're reading a document, whereas Windows Mobile allows several applications to operate simultaneously and truly multitask. Most first-time PDA buyers feel that Palm OS is easier to use but that Windows Mobile has stronger multimedia capability — although that gap is closing.

**Smarter phones.** It might sound obvious, but the first point to consider is what you want the device for. Most people skip this question and jump to specifications and brands. The first questions to ask are whether you want a device to replace your mobile phone, and whether you'll be doing lots of text input.

If you're planning to do lots of input, a device with either a dedicated keyboard or decent handwriting recognition is a must. Palm's Treo 650 and the iMate JAM/XDA Mini are good places to start.

The JAM and Mini share identical hardware but different bundled software. They rely on a touch-screen with handwriting recognition for input and run Windows Mobile 2003 SE.

The Treo runs Palm OS 5, has an integrated QWERTY keyboard and enough inbuilt memory to store years of calendar entries and thousands of contacts.

Trying to stand out from the pack in the crowded converged device space is tough, but HP has managed it with its iPaq hw6500 Mobile Messenger. It's a solid device with a clear 240x240 screen and full QWERTY keypad, plus a GPS receiver thrown in. When someone calls and asks "Where are you?" you'll be able to tell them — exactly.

If you only plan to use the device to look at your diary and contacts and aren't planning to do lots of data entry then a PIM-friendly mobile might be a better option for you. There are Windows Mobile

Smartphones on the market such as O2's Smartphone 2 and the myriad of phones from Sony Ericsson, Nokia and Motorola. Just check the iSync Compatibility List if you plan to sync with iCal and Address Book.

**On a budget.** If you're looking for a budget PDA then there's only one device Australian Macworld can recommend — The Palm Tungsten E2. With 32MB of memory, Bluetooth, an SD slot, brilliant 320x320 screen and zippy performance it's the best budget device on the market. While the retail price is \$400, you'll find it for at least ten percent less than that if you shop around.

**Bang for buck.** Mid-range devices pack the shelves of most electronics retailers. If you're after a Windows Mobile handheld then take a look at Dell's offering in this range, the X50. Skipping the VGA screen of the X50v trims about \$250, giving you the chance to bump storage up with a big SD or CF card. Like its big brother, the X50v, it sports both Bluetooth and WiFi connectivity but drops back from a 624MHz processor to a 520 MHz powerplant.

When Palm launched the Tungsten T5 it was maligned for producing what some called a boring device. However, with 215 MB of non-volatile storage it offers plenty of room for your data. Its biggest weakness is the lack of integrated WiFi — you'll need an extra \$50 for Palm's bundled T5/SDIO WiFi package.



**Cream of the crop.** If you're after a device that will not only deliver great PIM capability but also wireless connectivity and act as portable media centre then there are some excellent options. Palm's LifeDrive Mobile Manager has Bluetooth, WiFi, a 320x480 display and a massive 4GB of storage, making it the handheld storage king.

If you prefer a Pocket PC and don't mind investing in storage cards then HP's iPaq hx4700 offers SD and CF memory card slots as well as the market's best screen running at 480x640 resolution. The iPaq hx2750 delivers most of the features of the hx4700 but eschews the VGA screen for improved device security with an integrated fingerprint scanner and an extra 50MB of available storage. While both iPads

Name	Palm Tungsten E2	Dell X50	Palm Tungsten T5	iPaq 2410	iPaq 2750	Palm LifeDrive	iPaq hx4700	Dell X50v
<b>Processor</b>	200 MHz	520 MHz	416 MHz	520 MHz	624 MHz	416 MHz	624 MHz	624 MHz
<b>User Accessible</b>	26 MB	64 MB RAM/	3.85 GB	65 MB	185 MB	215 MB	135 MB	64 RAM/
<b>Memory<sup>1</sup></b>		128 MB ROM						128 ROM
<b>Slots</b>	SD	CF and SD	SD	CF and SD	CF and SD	SD	CF and SD	CF and SD
<b>Wireless</b>	Bluetooth	Bluetooth	Bluetooth and WiFi	Bluetooth and WiFi	Bluetooth and WiFi	Bluetooth	Bluetooth and WiFi	Bluetooth and WiFi
<b>Size (mm)</b>	114x79x15	119x73x16.9	121x73x19	119x77x16.3	119x77x16.3	121x78x15	131x77x15	119x73x16.9
<b>Weight</b>	133g	167g	193g	164g	164g	155g	187g	167g
<b>Screen</b>	320x320	240x320	320x480	240x320	240x320	320x480	480x640	480x640
	3.5"	3.7"	4"	3.5"	3.5"	4"	4"	3.7"
<b>RRP</b>	\$399	\$569	\$599	\$799	\$899	\$899	\$799	\$849

1: User Accessible Memory may be made up of both volatile and non-volatile memory



lack the LifeDrive's inbuilt storage, the falling price of memory cards means you can accessorise them to 2GB of storage for around \$250 on top of the purchase price.

The Dell X50v delivers almost exactly the same specifications as the hx4700 but in a slightly smaller form factor going for a 3.7" screen instead of the iPaq's 4" display.

**Let's accessorise.** Once you've decided on your handheld you'll need to look at some accessories in order to protect and get maximum value from your investment. The first accessory to consider is a screen protector. The display is both the most expensive and most fragile component in the device. It's not unknown for heavy PDA users to actually wear parts of a screen through.

There are two types of protector: adhesive and electrostatic. The difference is in how they stick to your screen. There are two things to consider with protectors: impact on screen quality and impact on touchscreen performance. My preference is for electrostatic protectors. Look at units from Pocket PC Techs, Proporta and Innopocket. Although these covers are generally more expensive than their adhesive counterparts, with a single cover costing about as much as 12-pack of the adhesive type, they tend to last longer and are usually washable.

**Just in case.** Once the screen is looked after you'll want to make sure the rest of the device is safely cocooned. PDA cases come in a number of different styles and are made from many different materials.

The best value protection can be achieved with an aluminium hard-case such as those made by Innopocket. If you've got some cash to burn then you may want to consider a titanium case but unless you really subject your handheld to a tough life this might be overkill.

Leather cases look great and can offer excellent protection as well. My personal favourites are the Covertec and Proporta units. Proporta make a leather case that has an aluminium front flap that offers excellent protection without looking too "commando".

If your budget can stretch a little further then Vaja makes beautiful cases from a wide variety of materials in a broad range of colours. They are generally considered to be the crème de la crème of PDA cases with a price tag to match. ☺

## The return of Palm

PalmOne has become Palm once again, the hardware company having purchased outright the brand it once shared with software arm PalmSource. As part of the rebranding, Palm is also renaming its product categories. The Zire and Tungsten brands are no more, replaced with the new Palm Z and Palm T series devices.

At just 98g, the Z22 would have to be the lightest handheld ever and, although there's no wireless capability, a bountiful 32 MB of non-volatile memory is provided — more than enough to carry thousands of addresses and calendar entries.

The slick white casing looks durable, and although the screen resolution is at the low end of the market at 160x160, it's quite bright and clear. Considering it replaces the mono-screened Zire 21 and (at \$179) also undercuts its predecessor's price, this is a great leap forward.

Moving up the market is the T|X. Although it looks like a darker version of the Tungsten T5, there are number of critical differences. For starters it includes both Bluetooth and WiFi, but memory is a little smaller with 100 MB of storage available and no Drive Mode. However, at a market-breaking \$499, the T|X delivers great value.



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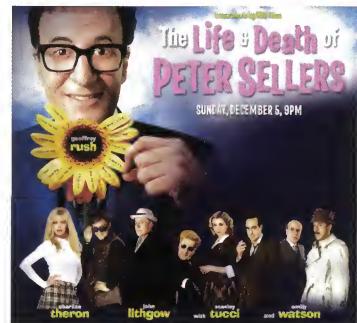
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## Pro File: Paul Tuersley

After 11 years in the business, Paul Tuersley has just come up roses with an Emmy award as part of the effects team for *The Life and Death of Peter Sellers*, on which he was Lead Visual Effects Compositor. In the Emmy afterglow, we grabbed a chance to speak with Paul Tuersley about how he got to where he is now and his love for the Mac platform.

**How was the Emmy experience?** The Emmys was a great experience, especially the bit where we all got to go up on stage. It was a lot more glamorous than my usual days spent in a dark room in Twickenham Film Studios.

I'm taking a few weeks off now, after spending the last year or so doing VFX for a new HBO/BBC series called *Rome*.

**Did you learn anything new about the business?** I was reminded that there are a lot of VFX houses out there, employing some really talented people. The quality of the work in the two VFX categories was very high, so we were pretty surprised when we won.

**Tell us about your career experiences and some of the highlights.** When I first started I was doing mostly motion graphics TV work, commercials and opening title sequences, working with a great designer/director called Pat Gavin. Obvious highlights have been the times I've worked abroad, living in New York while working on the Paul McCartney documentary *Wingspan* was particularly memorable. A few years ago I was doing mostly music videos, having a great time working with talented upcoming directors such as Simon & Jon and Lisa Lloyd, at a company called Addiction. Since I've been at Senate VFX, another highlight (beside the Emmy) came in late 2004, when I spent six weeks as onset VFX Supervisor for *Rome*, Episode 11 at Cinecitta Studios in Rome, which was a great learning experience.

**How have the last few years led to ending up with an Emmy on the mantle?** Film visual effects work is still relatively new for me. I started working at Senate VFX two years ago with *Peter Sellers* being my first project. I worked on quite a few shots, but the one that probably put me on the nominees list involved recreating a scene from the Peter Sellers film *Being There* where his character walks out onto a lake, actually walking on the water. The shot required a

mix of 2D/3D compositing, for which we made good use of the ability to import 3D camera tracking data from Maya into After Effects.

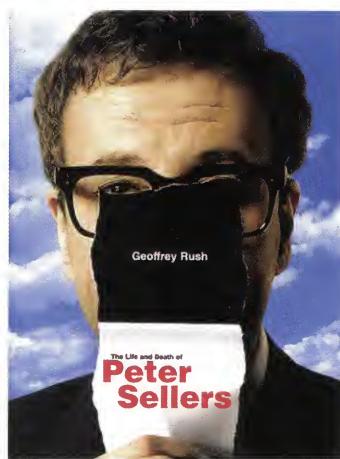
**What makes up your current work rig?** At Senate VFX I work on a Dual 2Ghz G5, with 3GB RAM and a couple of 200GB LaCie drives to store the footage locally. I spend most of my time using After Effects 6.5, but the compositors here are pretty evenly split between AE and Shake. We also use Commotion for rotoscoping and some 2D tracking.

**Are you a Mac devotee? How long have you been working on the platform?** Yes, I would say so. The first time I used a Mac would have been on a National Diploma in Graphic Design sometime around 1989. I think it was 1994, the year I graduated, when I started using After Effects 2.0 and I've stuck with it ever since.

**What's your favourite gadget or device of the moment and why?** I guess my favourite has to be the 20" G5 iMac I use at home. I work from home less than I used to, so I don't need a top of the range machine. It takes up a lot less space than my old CRT plus box and I love the screen, using my iPhoto library with the screensaver. It makes a great picture frame.

**What projects are you currently working on?** As I said, I've just finished working on *Rome*. I don't think I can tell you about what I'm working on next either, boo!

Something I can tell you, I've been getting into scripting with After Effects for the last year or so and am a regularly contributor to the AE scripting and expressions resource AE Enhancers.



**Any advice for new kids on the block?** Simply, get into the industry by whatever means necessary. Working with people in the business is the best way to learn. A lot of people start out in film VFX by doing rotoscoping (animating bezier/b-spline masks to create cutout mattes for non-bluescreen or bad bluescreen footage) and then move on to compositing over time. Obviously, the web is a great resource for help and tutorials. Google "after effects tutorials" for plenty of help. And be prepared to put in the extra hours to learn new software and compositing/animation techniques. ☺

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**System Requirements:** Mac® OS 10.3, iMac™ or G3 350 MHz or faster processor, or Microsoft® Windows® 98 SE, 2000, Me, XP, NT® (with Service Pack 5 or higher) Pentium® 350MHz or faster processor; 256 MB RAM, 350 MB free hard-disk space, CD-ROM drive, 800x600 resolution, millions of colours, Mouse, Sound Card and speakers recommended, Printer and internet access recommended.



Apple and education in Australia.

By Martin Levins.

**Hot Links**

[triplej.net.au/listen/jcast/jcast.xml](http://triplej.net.au/listen/jcast/jcast.xml)  
 List of podcasts from TripleJ

[www.mrock.com.au/music/podcast/index.php](http://www.mrock.com.au/music/podcast/index.php)  
 TripleM radio's offerings

[rubistar.4teachers.org](http://rubistar.4teachers.org)

An online rubric generator to assist with assessment  
[www.screensound.gov.au](http://www.screensound.gov.au)  
 Australia's audio visual archive

## Sounding off

**S**O, you've tried your hand at podcasting? Got past the network nazi at your school and had a chance to play with various software? A lot of teachers are reporting success in using audio in this way to deliver teaching materials. The obvious winner here is in the language area where pronunciation exemplars can be used for practice.

I want to move from the student as consumer, assuming they've understood the basics of a topic. Moving them to the role of producer allows them to express their world view, with the implied workflow of reflecting on and exploring their own ideas. Writing an essay, preparing a presentation or producing a movie are ways of achieving this, but can podcasting be used in the same vein?

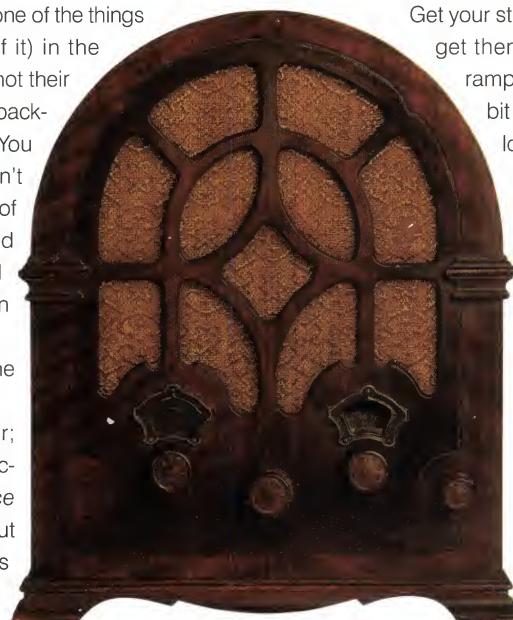
I don't know if you've tried it in class, but one of the things that strikes you is motivation (or lack of it) in the students. Like 3000 word essays, radio is not their preferred medium — unless you count the background that they listen to whilst working. You know, where you come in and say "you can't study with that noise in your ear" (they can of course, but that's another story). They tend to swap focus in and out of the background to listen to snippets of songs rather than listening to whole programs per se.

So is podcasting a good tool to use in the classroom?

Well, it's another arrow in the quiver; another option to engage learners. The reflective, tight programming style of a *Science Show* is more suited to older learners, but younger students need a bit more verve. It's hard to find programming for the 10-16 set as even JJJ, the doyen of youth broadcasting, seems to be aiming more at 21-35 year olds these days.

However, you can find nuggets of interest. Look for ideas and example programs to motivate. Get something a bit jazzy such as the J-cast, described as "a weekly grab bag of triple J radio highlights". It's a true mishmash (even the JJJ copywriters use this term) featuring excerpts from favourites such as Roy & HG, reviews, interviews and so on. At 30 minutes, it's probably a bit on the long side for younger aged students, your mileage may vary depending on their age.

Commercials are experimenting as well, so you might be able to find some stimulus there. In the eastern states, MMM has excerpts from breakfast radio that are reasonably short, chaotic and noisy — ideally matched to a year 9 class.



This is all part of the sandbox of course: that part of teaching where students get to play, familiarise and experiment. Very powerful learning is happening here, accompanied by excellent teaching opportunities.

Once you've listened to the professionals, start using the terminology. Everyone loves jargon: it makes them feel part of the scene. I'm not talking CB radio here, no need to 10-4, spy a Kojak with a Kodak or shake the trees and rake the leaves. I'm referring to the day to day jargon used in the profession.

I've always designed a teaching session around three elements: Tell them what you're going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you've told them. This structure is very similar to headlining a radio segment, cutting to the segment, then back-announcing it.

Get your students to refer to the headphones as "cans", get them to link or segue between segments and ramp the audio through a link. (Makes me feel a bit like Ensign Parker in *McHale's Navy*: "Gee I love that kind of talk".) Showing my age? No matter — the kids are gonna love this.

Jargon — check. Motivation — check.

To really set the scene for radio, try to build a sense of history by recreating a radio show that would have been broadcast before TV. Lots of opportunity here for subject areas such as Science (early manned space missions), History (reports from the first world war, propaganda broadcasts, Sir Henry Parkes' Tenterfield speech), LOTE ("France today") and so forth. You get the picture (or the sound anyway).

Not only will the putative broadcasters have to come up with the content, they need to match it with the soundscape of the day to

give the show some verisimilitude. The obvious GarageBand filters and tweaks can be matched by downloaded material from Screensound Australia. Who could resist Harold Latimer's "If England wants a hand" or Leonard Hubbard's "I'm going back again to Yarrawonga"? It'd be worth designing a unit around podcasting just to hear it.

Assessing this sort of thing can be helped with the production of a rubric to help keep the kids on track. Check out Rubistar with a search on "radio" for some good ideas.

So now, you've no excuse. There's the what, how, and now the why — you'll be broadcasting long blocks of non-stop rock in no time. ↗

**As an educator, Martin Levins likes empowering people to create using computing technologies.**

By Kirk McElhearn

## Surf between the flags

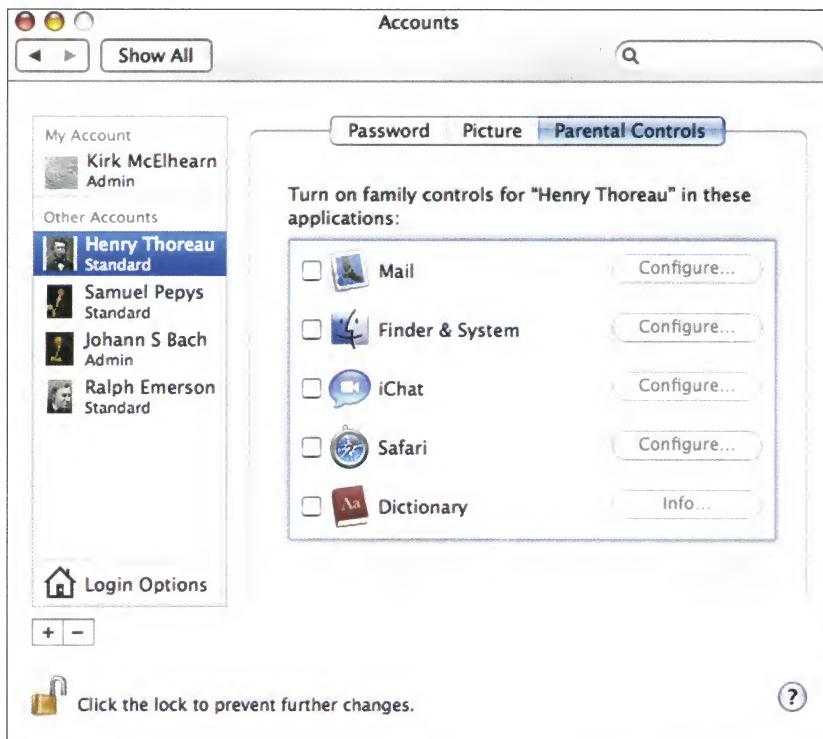
# Kid-proof your Mac

**D**on't take e-mail from strangers." "Look both ways before you iChat." "Stay away from bad web sites." Being a parent can be complicated – and now modern parents have the internet to worry about, too. Luckily, Tiger's parental controls can help.

Whether you share a Mac with your children or they have their own, it's a snap to create user accounts so that everyone has separate preferences and settings for applications. Tiger also lets you set parental controls, or limits on what your kids can do, so it's easier for them to use the computer – and so they have fewer things to fiddle with (or break).

Setting limits is a great way to get kids used to the Mac. Starting with basic applications and the games they want to play, you can gradually broaden their access to other programs. Parental controls are also a good way to protect your kids from the seamier side of the internet without investing in add-on software.

**One Mac, many users.** If you're the only user on your Mac, you may have noticed that you have special powers. With your secret decoder ring (your password), you're allowed to install software, make changes to preferences that affect the entire system, and create and delete other user accounts. You've got all this power because you're the administrator. Each Mac has at least one.



### Hot Links

[www.freeverse.com/bumpercar2/](http://www.freeverse.com/bumpercar2/)  
[www.app4mac.com/](http://www.app4mac.com/)

Child-friendly web browsers

There are also more-limited types of accounts. By default, when you create an account without administrator abilities, it's called a standard account. Standard users can't install software for all users or make changes to options in certain System Preferences panes (such as options in Startup Disk and Network, and others that affect the entire computer).

If you restrict an account further by using parental controls, it becomes a managed account. For instance, you can choose exactly which applications managed users can run, and you can limit the tasks they can perform in the Finder.

**Create a new account.** When you're ready to get started, open System Preferences, click on the Accounts pane, click on the padlock, and enter your administrator password. (Only administrators can create user accounts.)

You'll see a list of your Mac's user accounts. To create a new one, click on the plus-sign icon (+) below the accounts list. A sheet will appear. Enter a user name, a short name (which doesn't have to match the user's real name), and a password. Type the password a second time to verify it. Add a password hint if you want. Now you're ready to make the rules.

**House rules.** With the user account selected, click on the Parental Controls tab. You'll see that Tiger lets you set restrictions for five things: Mail, Finder & System, iChat, Safari, and Dictionary (see the screenshot "Setting limits"). You have different options for each one. I'll take you through the application options first.

**Mail.** Worried about your kids receiving sleazy spam or exchanging e-mail messages with strangers? You can set up a list of people (for instance, relatives, their homeroom teachers, and their best friends) with whom they can exchange messages.

Select the Mail option and click on Configure, and you'll see a sheet where you can add e-mail addresses. Select the Send Permission Emails To option, and Mail will send a message to you, or to someone else, so you can authorise e-mail messages to or from people not on the list. That's handy if your child is working on a project and needs to send and receive messages from new people. You must be using Mail in Tiger to give this authorisation.

**Setting limits.** Tiger lets you set parental controls for five different areas of your Mac. For instance, you can specify the people your children can exchange e-mail and iChat messages with, or restrict them to specific Safari bookmarks that route them toward safe sites.

**Only the essentials.** Simple Finder gives kids a minimalist interface in which they can't break anything. The Dock contains only three folders: My Applications, Documents, and Shared.

**iChat.** As with Mail, you can set up a list of people your child can chat with. Select iChat, click on Configure, and add any names you want.

**Safari.** Until recently, you've had to use a special browser, such as Freeverse Software's BumperCar or app4mac's KidsBrowser (see "Hot links"), if you wanted any control over your kids' surfing habits. Safari 2.x's parental controls cover the basics. You create Safari bookmarks for the sites you want to allow.

Select the Safari option and click on Configure. Now go to Apple: Log Out your user name, and then log back in as your child. Launch Safari. When you try to visit a web site, Safari will display a page telling you that the program is limited by parental controls. Click on Add Website, and then enter your administrator user name and password in the dialog box. A link to the site will appear in the Bookmarks bar. The user will be able to access sites only through the Bookmarks bar, so you may want to shorten the site name to conserve space.

If you want to add or subtract multiple bookmarks, the easiest way is to click on the locked Show All Bookmarks icon to the left (represented by an open book with a lock). Enter your user name and password, and then organise bookmarks in this view. Notice that Apple provides a Kids folder here with a number of sites you might want to include.

**Dictionary.** If you activate parental controls for the Dictionary application, it will limit access to "certain words, such as some profanity". You have no control over which words Dictionary blocks.

**A fitting Finder.** The Finder & System controls give you the most latitude in choosing what your kids can and can't do on your Mac. Select Finder & System and click on Configure to see the many limits you can set.

**Simple Finder.** Your first choice is between Simple Finder and Some Limits. Simple Finder is a great choice for young children, or for situations (such as in a computer lab or a library) where you want users to access only certain programs. It presents a very limited interface to the user: the Dock contains three folders (My



Applications, Documents, and Shared), and the user can work only with the applications you choose (see the screenshot "Only the essentials"). To set up this list, deselect the Allow option next to Applications, click on the disclosure triangle, and then select the applications you want to allow the user to work with.

**Some Limits.** You can use the Some Limits option to bar a user from certain areas of the Mac. For instance, you can let the user open all System Preferences panes, though he or she won't be able to change any that require administrator access. You can let the user modify the Dock. (If you don't choose this, set up the user's Dock the way you want before turning this option off.) You can also allow the user to administer printers and burn CDs and DVDs.

Your last option is Allow Supporting Programs. Choose it, and any application that you allow can launch any other application (even one you have not allowed). For example, clicking on a website link in Mail will open Safari, even if you have not allowed the user to work with Safari.

Next, decide which applications you want the user to run. As with Simple Finder, you can allow any or all applications, clicking on the disclosure triangles to see the programs available on your Mac. Once you're done, set up the user's Dock to contain icons for only the permitted applications. Just log in to the person's account (don't set limits yet, or you won't be able to make changes), drag the icons to (or from) the Dock, log out, and turn off the user's ability to change the Dock.

**The family-friendly Mac.** After you set up your kids' accounts, you'll know that they can run only the programs and access only the web sites that you want them to. As time goes by, you can relax these limitations, until your kids become the family's computer geeks. ↗

## No kids?

Parental controls aren't just for parents. Use these tools to limit users to certain tasks on any Mac — whether it's at a computer lab, a library, a kiosk, or an internet café.

## *Design like the professionals*

# Newsletter first-aid

**W**HEN creating a holiday newsletter or a PDF outlining your company's new dental plan, you generally don't have a cadre of nitpicking designers and copy editors to help you — you may not even have a page-layout program other than Microsoft Word. No one else has to know that.

In fact, it's surprisingly easy to create professional-looking newsletters, using only the typesetting tools built into your word processor.

If your newsletters suffer from a boring or clumsy design, this makeover plan will help. By following the editing and typesetting rules the pros follow, you can give your work a fresh new look and make it easier to read. The best part is that all these adjustments are possible not only in professional layout programs such as QuarkXPress and Adobe InDesign, but also in Word 2004 (as well as other versions) and Pages, part of Apple's iWork '05 suite.

**Divide the page.** Nothing kills a reader's enthusiasm more quickly than a long, unbroken block of text (see the illustration "Beauty school").

Rather than cramming a year's worth of activities into one narrative, look for ways to break out some pieces into stand-alone stories. Then place each of those stories in its own text box.

To create a new text box in Word, go to Insert: Text Box and then click and drag to draw the box on screen. To give the box a background colour and help separate it from the rest of your text, choose Format: Text Box and click on the Colors And Lines tab. To remove the default border around the box, set Line Color to No Line.



## Hot Links

[www.creativepro.com/story/feature/23163.html](http://www.creativepro.com/story/feature/23163.html)  
Good tutorial on font selection

To create a new text box in Pages, go to Insert: Text (if the menu item is greyed out, click on the edge of your document to hide the blinking cursor) and then drag the edge of the box to create the desired shape. You can add a fill colour or a border from the Graphic section of the Inspector palette.

If you can't turn your long story into a few shorter stories, you may be able to separate your text into smaller chunks by adding subheads. Leave an empty line above each subhead, but not below it – you want the eye to associate the subhead with the paragraph beneath it. Also, make your subheads similar in size to your body text (you can use a special font or colour to help them stand out). If the subhead is much bigger than the body text, it could mess up text alignment.

**Tip:** To ensure that your subheads are consistent – a key tenet of good design – create a style for them. Once you've designed a subhead, highlight it. In Word, go to Format: Style. Click on New and give the subhead style a name. If you'd like to use it in other documents, select the Add To Template option. Then click on OK. In Pages, click on the plus sign (+) at the bottom of the Styles drawer (if you don't see the drawer, press ⌘-shift-T to open it).

**Add white space.** What isn't on your page can be just as important as what is. Elements tend to look messy when they're crowded together. Leaving breathing room around all the items on your page will make your document more inviting.

**Set wide margins.** Start by placing generous margins – a couple of centimetres or so – on either side of your page. In Word, set

margins by going to Format: Document. In Pages, go to the Layout section of the Inspector palette (it's the second button from the left in the Inspector window). (After your newsletter is complete, adjusting margins is a good way to fill a page or fit more text.)

**Create columns.** Long lines of text are hard to follow; short ones can look choppy. To keep the eye moving, limit the length of lines to no less than 20 and no more than 75 characters. The easiest way

**Beauty school.** This holiday newsletter (left) suffers from poor font choices, long stretches of dense text, and overall spacing issues. To fix the problem (right), I divided the text into more-manageable chunks with subheads and a small text box, added columns to shorten the lines, and created consistent white space throughout the page.

to keep this proportion in check is to divide the text into columns. In Word, go to Format: Columns and enter the number of columns you want. In Pages, go to the Layout section of the Inspector palette.

**Adjust the leading.** For readability, your document's leading — the amount of space between lines of text — should be at least one point larger than your text size. Adding slightly more leading often looks better.

In Word, you can fine-tune leading by going to Format: Paragraph. Set the Line Spacing pull-down menu to Exactly and enter the desired leading size in the text box. In Pages, you'll find the leading controls in the Text section of the Inspector palette. Use the Line slider to adjust leading, or use the arrows to the slider's right for more-precise control. (Adjusting leading is another great way to fit text precisely on a page.)

**Change the indentation.** Too much white space can also be a problem. By default, many word processors and page-layout programs create indents that are too deep, especially for narrow columns. An indented line should usually project only two or three characters into a paragraph.

To set a more moderate indentation in Word, press ⌘-A to select all of your text and open the Alignment And Spacing section of the Formatting palette; the First setting adjusts the indentation of paragraphs.

In Pages, go to the Text section of the Inspector palette and open the Tabs pane. The First Line setting adjusts paragraph indentation.

**Be consistent.** When you're working with white space, check for consistency. For instance, the space around an image (defined by its text-wrap setting) should match the space between columns. To specify the text wrap in Word, select the image or text box and go to Format: Picture or Format: Text Box, respectively. Select the Layout tab and click on Advanced. Use the Distance From Text settings in the Text Wrapping tab to define your spacing. To access text-wrapping controls in Pages, click on the Inspector palette's Wrap button (the third button from the left).

**Pay attention to details.** Once you've settled on your page's overall design, it's time to focus on the details. Before I prepare any document for print, I check for the following problems:

**Correct straight quotation marks.** Even professional designers sometimes neglect to watch out for straight apostrophes (') and quotation marks ("); they seem to crop up everywhere, marring otherwise lovely typefaces — their biggest problem is that they're unsightly. To make sure they aren't in your document, find and replace all your apostrophes and quotation marks (keep in mind that you should use straight apostrophes and quotation marks in some cases, such as when they're referring to feet and inches). The process is the same in both programs. Press ⌘-F to open the Find palette, enter an apostrophe or quotation mark in both the Find and Replace fields, and then click on Replace All. (If this doesn't work in Word, go to Tools: AutoCorrect. Click on the AutoFormat As You Type tab and select the Straight Quotes With Smart Quotes option. Click on OK. Perform the search and replace again.)

## Choose fonts wisely

Funky fonts can make a wonderful visual impact when they're used sparingly. Using an off-the-wall font for a document's primary text, however, can make the document hard to read.

For long blocks of text, err on the side of readability — go with something fairly conservative. For small type, serif typefaces (those with tiny decorative strokes at the tops and bottoms of letters, such as Times and New York) tend to be easier to read than sans serif faces (such as Verdana and Arial). However, sans serifs — with their clean-cut edges — have a simplicity that some designers find irresistible.

Whatever typeface you choose, avoid using too many different fonts (unless you're going for a ransom-note look, of course). Two fonts (and their associated alphabets — italic, bold, and so on) are enough to handle most of the text in most documents. Using one serif font and one sans serif font in a document — for example, using a serif font such as Janson for body text and a sans serif such as Gotham for subheads — can provide an eye-pleasing contrast. (For more on choosing typefaces, check out the recent tutorial on CreativePro.com — see "Hot links".)



**Save stragglers.** A widow (a one-word line left alone at the top of a page) can be a sad sight in an otherwise cheerful document. Both programs have options for controlling widows. In Word, go to Format: Paragraph: Line And Page Breaks and select the Widow/Orphan Control option. In Pages, go to the More tab of the Inspector palette's Text section.

**Turn on hyphenation.** If your paragraphs are justified — meaning that all lines are the same length — you may end up with odd gaps in your text (also known as loose lines). To even out the spacing, turn on the document's automatic-hyphenation settings. In Word, go to Tools: Hyphenation and choose the Automatically Hyphenate Document option. To prevent the stacking of too many hyphenated words, set the Limit Consecutive Hyphens To option to 3 or 4.

To activate the hyphenation settings in Pages, go to Inspector: Text: More, and make sure that the Remove Hyphenation For Paragraph setting is not selected.

Hyphenation will also help prevent abrupt, jagged edges in non-justified (or ragged) lines of text. If you still end up with a word hanging in white space, well beyond the lines above and below it, place the cursor in front of the lonesome word and press shift-return to force it to the next line.

**Check your work.** Your holiday newsletter might just become a family heirloom, so take the time to check it twice. When your pages are perfect, run your spelling checker one last time; then you're ready to print. ☺



Reviews of the latest computer books.

By Keith White.

**Hot Links**[www.missingmanuals.com](http://www.missingmanuals.com)

The Missing Manuals series

[www.wiley.com](http://www.wiley.com)

Read an excerpt from Digital Photography Top 100 Simplified Tips and Tricks

# Photographic memoirs

**iPhoto 5 The Missing Manual** is a 400-page full-colour treatment of what is often regarded as the junior partner of Apple's brilliant iLife suite. iPhoto has become a serious beast now that it's five, and you'll probably need a bit of help to work it to the max.

The first of the three main sections of the book deals with the basics of digital photography: composition, lighting and the particular requirements of different locations. This is useful stuff and a counter argument to the often-heard "I know I'm shooting crap but I can fix it on my Mac". The second section is all about getting your photos into your Mac, organising and editing them. iPhoto ain't Photoshop but it's got some pretty handy editing tools to help you with exposure, levels, contrast, colour balance and sharpening.

The third section shows you how to publish your organised and edited masterpieces as prints, online, as a book or as a DVD slide show. A short finale shows you some iPhoto stunts including screensavers, AppleScript tricks and disk backup techniques. Appendixes cover troubleshooting, additional resources and a menu-by-menu dissection of the program.

The standout colour illustrations in this book perform a vital function in highlighting the often subtle differences between an OK photo and a stunner. Like many Mac users I'd paid iPhoto little attention. Since I've read this book I use it a lot more.

**Digital Photography Top 100 Simplified Tips And Tricks (Second Edition)** is for people who already know the basics of digital photography, and vows to make you better quick smart. Beautifully illustrated in full colour and divided into ten colour-coded sections of related techniques, this book goes all out to deliver on its promise. Preliminary sections deal with setting up your camera and the fundamentals of lighting, exposure, focus and depth of field. Here you will learn to choose the best image file format and resolution for your purposes, to frame silhouettes, and to master metering techniques, shutter speeds and focal length. After this you'll learn about developing your own style, using filters and making the most out of natural conditions

Editing is done with Photoshop Elements, which you'll use for batch processing, creating adjustment layers, composing panoramas and hand colouring black-and-white originals. More specifically you'll correct colour casts, improve image contrast and bring out hidden shadow and highlight detail. Then you're ready to crop, sharpen,

arrange and print. Finally you'll learn how to archive your photos, create PDF slideshows or show them off in a variety of other ways.

Each of the hundred tips occupies a two-page spread and has a four-stage difficulty level indicator like a GarageBand audio meter.

According to the publisher, the five stars in this Five-Star Visual Learning System are: Minimal text and maximum illustrations (tick); Task-oriented step-by-step approach (tick); Navigational aids connect instructions to illustrations (I think this means they use arrows, but tick anyway); Self-contained two-page lessons (tick); Uniform layout makes it easy to read less and learn more (tick for me but some may disagree).

## Teach Yourself Visually Adobe Photoshop CS 2

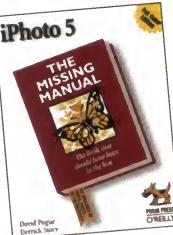
also targets visual learners — people who "prefer instructions that show you how to do something and skip the long-winded explanations". So it's straight down to work exploring the Photoshop workspace, setting preferences, opening an existing image or starting one from scratch. The pace at the start is very gentle, working through views, rulers and guides and the Undo command into changing image size, making and manipulating selections, painting, drawing and adjusting colour. More sophisticated stuff includes layers, layer styles such as drop shadows and bevels, applying filters, drawing with the shape tool and manipulating type.

Turn Photoshop into a willing robot by recording Actions or use other automatic features to create contact sheets, picture packages, web galleries and panoramas. Learn the pros and cons of different file formats, add descriptive and copyright information and slice your images for effective web deployment. Then print.

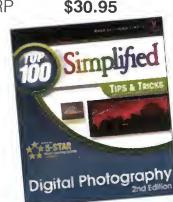
Although all the numerous screen shots come from Platform 2, any minor differences between Windows and Mac systems are consistently noted throughout the book. The steps in each sequence are brief and clear and well-linked to screen shots. One minor annoyance was the use of Illustrator-type graphics on nearly every page to introduce a topic or to illuminate tips. In a visual book like this every image has to earn its keep and these cutesy images just didn't cut it for information load to the extent that screen shots would have. ☺

**Keith has been a Mac addict since 1984 and still can't fathom why there is anyone who isn't.**

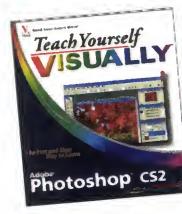
Title	<b>iPhoto 5 The Missing Manual</b>
Author	<b>David Pogue and Derrick Story</b>
Publisher	<b>O'Reilly</b>
ISBN	<b>0596100345</b>
RRP	<b>\$55.00</b>



Title	<b>Digital Photography Top 100 Simplified Tips And Tricks (Second Edition)</b>
Author	<b>Gregory Georges</b>
Publisher	<b>Wiley</b>
ISBN	<b>0764596160</b>
RRP	<b>\$30.95</b>



Title	<b>Teach Yourself Visually Adobe Photoshop CS 2</b>
Author	<b>Mike and Linda Wooldridge</b>
Publisher	<b>Wiley</b>
ISBN	<b>0764588400</b>
RRP	<b>\$38.95</b>





R E B I R T H



## Mbox 2 Pro Tools LE

**HARDWARE** | two pristine mic pres . zero-latency monitoring . 100% usb powered . midi/i/o . s/pdif/digital i/o . windows & mac

**SOFTWARE** | industry-standard recording, editing & mixing . integrated midi . beat detective le . 51 plug-ins & instruments . rewire support



All-new Pro Tools Ignition Pack™  
software & tools included



broadjam

Now it's easy to pick the right partner to help you **grow your business** into the digital future.



The Kodak you see today grows out of all the names that can help your business thrive.

To learn how, **call us on 1800 339 803** or visit us on the web [graphics.kodak.com](http://graphics.kodak.com)

Kodak Polychrome  
GRAPHICS

creo

NEXPRESS

ENCAD, Inc.  
A Kodak Company

Kodak Versamark, Inc.

**Kodak**

# Web browsers

*Firefox and OmniWeb help you navigate better*

**C**ONVERSATIONS about web browsers are like conversations about religion or politics: if you join one, you'll probably hear some strong opinions. You also might also hear questions like "You mean that thing I look at the web with?"

Perhaps you use a certain browser simply because it came with your Mac, not because it provides you with the best web-browsing experience. Your web browser may not be doing all it can for you – in other words, it may not allow you to efficiently access all the web has to offer.

This review highlights five browsers that have excellent reputations, have recently been updated, and are widely available: Apple's Safari 2.0, Mozilla's Camino 0.8.4 and Firefox 1.0.6, The Omni Group's OmniWeb 5.1.1, and Opera Software's Opera 8.0.2. Alexander Clauss's iCab isn't included here because its most recent update, version 3.0, is currently a beta. Netscape's Navigator hasn't been updated since our last web-browser review. Also, Microsoft's Internet Explorer isn't included here because its days are numbered – it's no longer being developed for the Mac. (Just as we were going to press, Opera Software announced that it would no longer be charging for the ad-free version of its browser. This review is based on that browser when it cost \$US39.)

**Must-have features.** A web browser is simply a vehicle that helps you get around the web, and a good web browser is one that's unobtrusive. All the browsers in this review have common features – ways to manage bookmarks, cookies, and security options; tabbed browsing; and autofill capabilities for web-based forms. Each browser also loads web pages at about the same speed. The only noticeable speed difference used to be Firefox's very long program-launch time, which seems to be resolved in version 1.0.6.

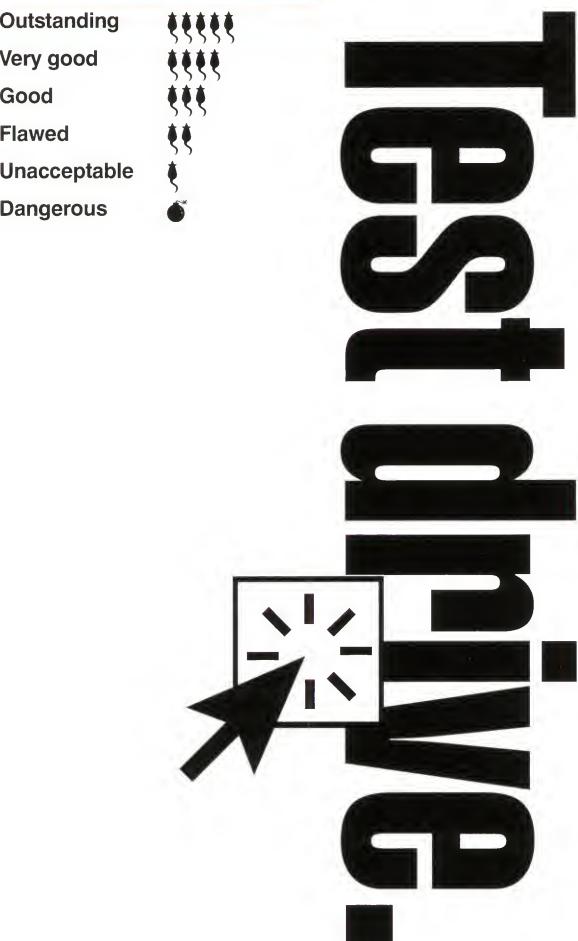
While each of these programs implements standard features in a slightly different fashion, the principles tend to be the same across all five browsers, or at least similar enough that you'll quickly get used to the differences. (Only OmniWeb posed a bit of a problem – the program's default home-page setting was called Start Page and took us several minutes to locate.) These browsers differ most in the extra features they offer and in the ease with which they let you navigate the web.

**Firefox extends the experience.** Mozilla's Firefox and Camino are the most versatile and extensible browsers in this review. They are based on the Mozilla engine, which is compatible with most web sites. They are also designed to accept third-party plug-ins, or extensions, which can add features, functionality, and different looks (or skins) to the program. There are many more plug-ins available for Firefox than for Camino.

In fact, these extensions are what make Firefox so great. For example, Forecastfox displays a weather forecast at the bottom of your browser window. My personal favourite, FoxyTunes, lets you control iTunes. There are so many extensions for Firefox that you can have nearly as much fun tricking out the program as you can browsing the web.

## Ratings key

Outstanding	★★★★★
Very good	★★★★
Good	★★★
Flawed	★★
Unacceptable	★
Dangerous	●



We evaluate, rigorously test and give detailed assessments of new-release software and hardware.

**Austere but able.** Camino lacks many of the features found in the other web browsers, but it was able to handle complex sites such as ESPN.com



	Safari 2.0	Camino 0.8.4	Firefox 1.0.6
■ Type	Web browser		
■ Rating	3 1/2	3 1/2	3 1/2
■ Pros	Integrated RSS reader	Compatible with a wide array of web sites; extensible with plug-ins and extensions	Compatible with a wide array of web sites; excellent Find feature; extensible with plug-ins and extensions
■ Cons	May not be fully supported by all web sites; integrated RSS reader may not satisfy hardcore newshounds	Lacks some standard features; Fewer available extensions than Firefox	None significant
■ RRP	Free	Free	Free
■ Publisher	Apple Computer	Mozilla Organization	Mozilla Organization
■ Distributor	Integrated with OS X 10.4	Available online	Available online
■ Reviewer	Jeffery Battersby		
■ Hot links	<a href="http://www.apple.com/macosx/features/safari/">www.apple.com/macosx/features/safari/</a>	<a href="http://www.mozilla.org">www.mozilla.org</a>	<a href="http://www.mozilla.org">www.mozilla.org</a>



**Plug me in, soup me up.** Installing plug-ins in Firefox and Camino is as easy as downloading them from the Mozilla.org web site. The plug-ins installed in Firefox are listed at the bottom of the browser window, on the right.

Firefox also includes several less obvious but equally cool tools. It has the best Find tool of the browsers in this review. While most browsers lay a Find window right on top of the web page you're trying to search, Firefox simply brings up a little Find box at the bottom of the page. Then it highlights the results on the web page; options for how your results are displayed are easily accessible. This feature is nothing short of brilliant.

**Pop on top.** Opera displays little pop-up windows (top right) to tell you that it has blocked pop-up windows.



Firefox also has a killer pop-up blocker that you can enhance with extensions such as Adblock, which also allows you to block other types of ads on web sites. Unlike Safari, Firefox doesn't have a built-in RSS reader; instead, it includes Live Bookmarks, which monitor web pages that have RSS feeds and then alert you when the sites are updated.

Aside from the fact that it's built on Mozilla's stellar foundation, Camino is a little immature. It lacks many features – such as text autofill (except for passwords) and RSS-feed recognition – that are standard in all the other browsers. You'll want to choose a different browser for day-to-day use.

**All the news that's fit to read.** Safari's most touted new feature is its built-in RSS news reader and aggregator. Many sites on the web – such as weblogs and news sites – use RSS feeds to notify site visitors that the web site has changed. You used to need specialised software to monitor and alert you to these changes. Now most web browsers include some RSS-feed-monitoring capabilities.

Each browser, except Camino, monitors sites that have RSS feeds and alerts you when a site has been updated. Safari also lets you read all the latest headlines without having to leave the comfort of your browser. Safari's news reader is a little awkward, though. Short of creating a folder for all your favourite news sites, there's no easy way to organise and view all your favourite feeds – so hard-core weblog readers or news junkies who are used to using a dedicated program may not find Safari's RSS feature useful. If you're new to the blog- and news-reading game, Safari is certainly a good place to start.

Safari also has a leg up on the competition if you have a .Mac account. Using iSync with .Mac, you can synchronise your bookmarks across several Macs.

**What a browser costs.** Opera is the only browser reviewed here that (at the time of writing) came in both a free and a for-pay version (\$US39). (OmniWeb costs \$US30 up front and has no free version.) The free version of Opera sported little, slightly annoying advertisements at the top of the browser. When you paid for Opera, the only thing that changed was the ad banner

OmniWeb 5.1.1	Opera 8.0.2
Excellent, unique browser features; thumbnail views of open pages	Highly configurable; useful keyword shortcuts for search sites
May not be fully supported by some web sites; tabbed browser not well suited to small displays	Features don't justify price; some unusual interface quirks
\$US30	Free with advertising; ad-free version \$US39 (as reviewed)
Omni Group	Opera Software
Available online	Available online
www.omnigroup.com	www.opera.com

at the top of the application disappeared; paying for Opera didn't gain you any features that the other browsers don't provide.

Opera has several strange interface quirks that kept me guessing. For example, pressing  $\text{⌘}-\text{T}$  brings up a new tabbed window in the other browsers, but in Opera the same key combination brings up a bookmark window. When you configure the program to block pop-up windows, it pops up its own little windows telling you when a pop-up has been blocked. Although you can turn off this preference, many such oddities that mar the browsing experience appear from time to time. On a positive note, Opera is highly configurable, even allowing you to create your own shortcuts for search sites. So typing G (the shortcut for

Google) and hogwash in the address field will execute a Google search for hogwash and display your search results.

OmniWeb is our second-favourite browser of this bunch, providing a unique tabbed-window environment, as well as extensive options for customising your browsing experience. Unlike the other four browsers, which place tabs at the top of the browser window, OmniWeb places a thumbnail image of each open window in a drawer on one side of the main browser window. The benefit of this thumbnail view is twofold: first, you can see each open web page, which is a useful visual cue; second, OmniWeb constantly monitors the pages in the thumbnail view for changes and, if a change occurs, a small green check mark appears next to the thumbnail image. This approach is handy, but having several tabs open at a time requires that you scroll up and down in the drawer to see every site. Even if you change the thumbnail tabs to text, the drawer itself takes up quite a bit of space.

OmniWeb also lets you create Workspaces, which are essentially collections of web pages that you can open at the same time. Further, OmniWeb can save your current browsing state so all the windows open just as you had them when you closed the browser or shut down your computer.

The only problem with OmniWeb is that it may not be compatible with some web sites because it's not based on the Mozilla or the Internet Explorer engine. This can be inconvenient (for more details, see the sidebar "What a difference a browser makes").

## What a difference a browser makes

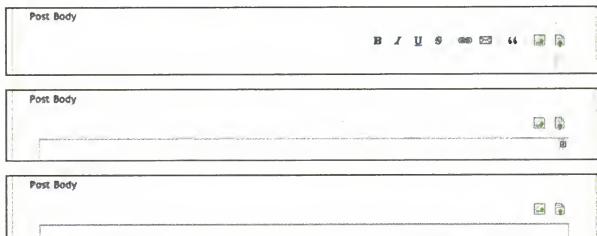
Not all browsers let you take full advantage of every web site. In fact, some web sites hobble themselves if you're not using a certain browser. I learned this lesson while using Six Apart's web-based application TypePad. TypePad lets you create and remotely host a weblog without having to install any software on your computer, and it makes entering text, adding images and hyperlinks, and styling text easy.

I first discovered a problem while I was using Safari to write a blog about a house I was building. At the time, Six Apart had announced some new TypePad features that I didn't seem to have access to. Six Apart's tech support prompted me to give the application a go in Netscape 7.0; sure enough, I suddenly had access to all of the site's features.

The reason? The site has been developed for use with Microsoft Internet Explorer and Mozilla-based browsers such as Camino, Netscape, and Firefox. Browsers such as Safari

can probably handle the JavaScript that gives these pages their application-like features, but when you load the page, the site receives your browser information, sees that you're not using IE or a Mozilla-based browser, and won't load the JavaScript. In many cases, this has nothing to do with your browser's actual ability to load the web site fully.

So if you find that some web sites are missing features that you think they should have, try using a Mozilla-based browser such as Netscape or Firefox. That simple change may give you access to everything you need. Alternatively, some browsers, such as Opera, allow you to imitate another browser, effectively identifying your browser as either IE or Mozilla. You can also do this in Safari, with Gordon Byrnes's Safari Enhancer, which gives you the option of enabling Safari's Debug menu. Via the Debug menu, you can select the browser you'd like to imitate.



**Less is more?** Depending on which browser you use, you may not be getting all the features a web site has to offer. For example, TypePad's formatting palette in Firefox (left) shows all available options. In Opera, OmniWeb, and Safari (right, in descending order), various features are disabled.

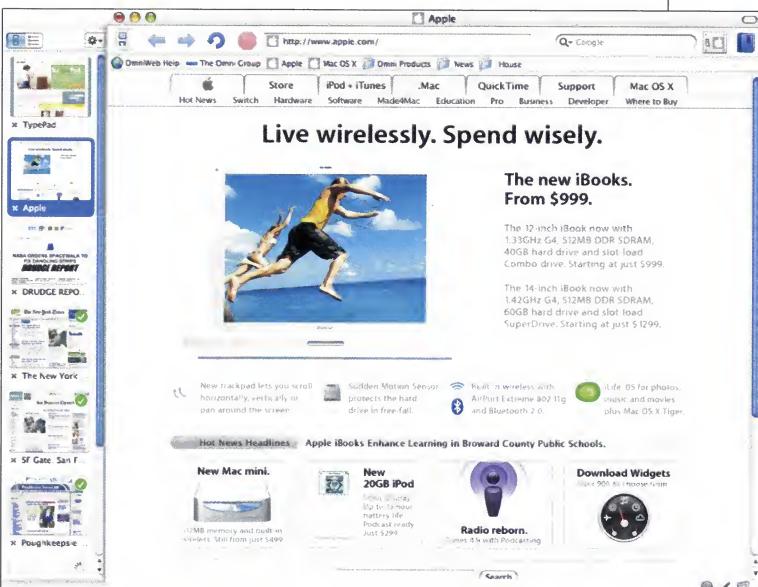


**Newseworthy.** Safari now includes the ability to aggregate and display RSS news feeds.

**Dahling, you look mahvelous.** Over the past several years, web pages have moved from simple HTML that displayed text with a few images to sites that can be as beautiful and elegant as high-end magazines.

To get that slick look, graphic artists and web designers have come to rely on Cascading Style Sheets, or CSS. By using CSS, designers can be more creative with the graphical elements they use, change the organisation of text on a page, and change typefaces, sizes, and styles.

Most of the sites you visit daily, such as newspaper or magazine sites, take advantage of basic forms of CSS but still rely on older, HTML-driven techniques such as tables and frames to provide a consistent look-and-feel. As expected, all the browsers handled the test sites without a problem (see the sidebar "How we tested"). Surprisingly, all the browsers handled cutting-edge CSS technology well, too. So as web designers take greater advantage of CSS, you'll be able to view the content on those pages without a problem and exactly as the designers intended, no matter which of these browsers you choose.



## Hot Links

[andrew.hedges.name/experiments/speed\\_test/index4.html](http://andrew.hedges.name/experiments/speed_test/index4.html)  
JavaScript Speed test 4.0

## How we tested

We selected ten different web sites that represented what users might encounter in a typical day of browsing. We visited these sites to see whether the browsers met several criteria. We also ran a test of common JavaScript actions in each browser.

To assess overall user experience, we visited web sites for the New York Times ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)), Newsweek ([www.newsweek.com](http://www.newsweek.com)), and the San Francisco Chronicle ([www.sfgate.com/chronicle](http://www.sfgate.com/chronicle)), and a banking web site called M&T Bank ([www.mandtbank.com](http://www.mandtbank.com)). We considered how consistently each browser displayed the pages, making sure that a site's functionality was the same across browsers.

To look at CSS implementation, we checked out the W3C-validated Vivabit ([www.vivabit.co.uk](http://www.vivabit.co.uk)) and CSS Zen Garden ([www.csszengarden.com](http://www.csszengarden.com)). For our discussion of XMLHttpRequest, a technology that could be challenging for many browsers, we went to the sites discussed in the sidebar "Ready for the revolution."

We ran JavaScript Speed Test 4.0, from Andrew Hedges (see "Hot links"), to determine not only how each browser handled the widespread JavaScript language, but also how fast each one completed common JavaScript actions. We also looked at various features on these sites, and used a web-based weblog-creation application called TypePad (see the sidebar "What a difference a browser makes").

The developers for each of these browsers are making a point of embracing powerful technologies, such as XMLHttpRequest, that aren't currently ubiquitous on the web but that are certain to shape its future (see the sidebar "Ready for the revolution").

## Australian Macworld's buying advice.

Mozilla's Firefox 1.0.6 is our browser of choice because it's hugely customisable, compatible with the most web sites and web-based applications, and downright fun to use. Sure, Safari 2.0.1 is an excellent browser and has some nice new functionality with its integrated RSS news reader, but its usefulness doesn't outweigh Firefox's.

Are you willing to spend a few more bucks for a browser with better features than a free one can offer? The Omni Group's OmniWeb 5.1.1 offers significant value for \$US30: thumbnail-based tabs, the ability to save groups of web pages as Workspaces, and several small but useful features. ☐

**Love-hate relationship.** OmniWeb's tab view lets you see thumbnails of all your open tabs but does so at the expense of precious desktop space.



## Hot Links

[maps.google.com](http://maps.google.com)  
[labs.google.com/suggest](http://labs.google.com/suggest)  
[www.pressdisplay.com](http://www.pressdisplay.com)

Sites that make use of XMLHttpRequest technology

## Ready for the revolution

A number of web sites are beginning to make use of a new technology called XMLHttpRequest. Developed by Microsoft and supported by most browsers, XMLHttpRequest allows a web page to communicate with a server and retrieve data. Combined with a little JavaScript programming — a technique known as Asynchronous JavaScript and XML (AJAX) — this technology can dynamically change information on a web page without reloading it. According to David Sawyer McFarland of Sawyer McFarland Media — a frequent contributor to this magazine — this technology is now driving sites such as Google Maps, Google Suggest, and PressDisplay (see “Hot links”). McFarland states that this technology is, “hot, hot, hot” and that “many web sites are jumping on the bandwagon.”

All the browsers reviewed here stack up evenly when it comes to loading this not-yet-standard code. They all handled these sites without a problem, which means that no matter which browser you use, you’ll be ready for the revolution.



**View new tech.** Each browser we tested easily handled sites such as PressDisplay, which uses XMLHttpRequest technology.

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**SECURITYCAM**

■ Type	Database application
■ Rating	★★★★★
■ Pros	<b>More efficient Find Matching Records command; easier data-entry with drop-down calendars and text auto-completion; efficient Save as PDF and Save As Excel commands; tab-control layout objects save time and space; scripting variables offer more options; developers can reuse tables, fields, and scripts using new copy and paste support (Advanced edition)</b>
■ Cons	Variables can't be used in custom dialog buttons
■ OS X	OS X 10.3.9 or later
■ RRP	\$869; upgrade from FMP 6 Developer or 7 Developer \$519 (Standard version \$499 or \$299 upgrade). Until 30 June 2006, users of FMP 6, 7 or 8 Standard can upgrade to FMP 8 Advanced for \$519.
■ Publisher	FileMaker
■ Distributor	FileMaker Asia-Pacific
■ Reviewer	William Porter
■ Hot links	<a href="http://www.filemaker.com.au">www.filemaker.com.au</a>

## FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced

*Easy-to-use program morphs into a powerhouse*

JUST last year, enthusiastic software reviewers throughout the computer industry greeted the release of FileMaker Pro 7 as the most significant upgrade in the product's history. With the release of FileMaker Pro 8, the company has done something surprising: Rather than resting on its laurels, FileMaker has released another significant upgrade about a year sooner than many industry observers expected.

**Developer edition renamed.** Starting with the release of version 4 in 1997, FileMaker has come in two flavours: a standard version, called FileMaker Pro, for end-users and users with limited development needs, and a separate version, called FileMaker Developer, which had all the features in the standard version plus some features specifically for expert developers. With the release of version 8, FileMaker Developer has been renamed FileMaker Pro Advanced, though the term "FileMaker" is commonly used to refer to features both products share.

The Advanced version accounts for the biggest changes in the new release. Don't let the word "advanced" scare you off. This is now the version I recommend for anyone designing FileMaker databases.

FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced lets you copy and paste fields, relationships, script steps and whole scripts – even entire tables – not just within the same file, but from one file to another. This is especially significant because when converting your old FileMaker 6 databases, you can now take greater advantage of the new relational features in FileMaker by bringing all your tables into a single file, and you no longer need a third-party utility to do it.

FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced also gives expert developers nearly complete control over what menus are displayed for which users and when, what commands are in those menus, and what actions

(or scripts) those commands trigger. In most of my FileMaker Pro 8 databases, for example, I'll get rid of the Delete All Records command and substitute my own New Record script action for the default New Record action.

A number of developer-oriented features are available both in FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced and in the standard version of FileMaker Pro 8. Developers can now define variables right in the scripts that use them. In the past, it was necessary to use predefined global fields to hold temporary values. I love variables, and my only complaint is that they can't be used in every instance, for example, to provide the text for buttons in custom dialogs.

The wonderful Tab-control feature lets you assign the same space on a single layout to different groups of fields. When users click on a tab, the fields assigned to it become visible and the others are hidden, as if they were in different layers. This used to require careful creation of multiple layouts. You can now enhance a database's user interface in minutes, where it used to take hours.

**It's not all about developers.** The standard edition of FileMaker Pro 8 includes a number of out-of-the-box improvements for end-users, too – that is, people who use databases as opposed to designing them. The File menu contains a pair of new commands that make it a snap for users to save reports as PDF files or export record sets directly to Excel files, and at the same time, e-mail these files instantly to colleagues or clients. FileMaker offers improved live spell-checking (it uses a squiggly underline to highlight suspect words, instead of just beeping at you as you type) and – finally – auto-completion of values entered in fields.

The new Find Matching Records command lets users find all the records that have exactly the same data in the same field, without having to enter Find mode, type, and execute the command. You can now enter dates by clicking on a day in the calendar instead of typing numbers, slashes, and four-digit years. There are also a number of nice shortcuts that make finding dates and date ranges easier; for example, you can now find all the records with dates in April 2005 by searching for "4/2005" rather than "1/4/2005..30/4/2005".

**Australian Macworld's buying advice.** The usability enhancements in FileMaker Pro 8 are compelling enough to pique the interest of end-users, but the indirect benefits of FileMaker 8 may be even greater. Developers working in FileMaker Pro 8 Advanced can now write smarter scripts, build better user interfaces, and deliver databases more quickly than they could before. And that's good for end-users, too. ☺

**Layer upon layer upon layer.** The Tab-control tool lets you layer fields on top of one another on the same layout, and you don't have to be a FileMaker guru to use it.

Current Home	Current Work	Old Addressees
Street	12345 White Rock Rd	
City	Dallas	
State	TX	Zip      75218
Modified	Tuesday, September 6, 2005 3:55 PM	

■ Type	Adventure game
■ Rating	beta
■ Pros	<b>Beautifully produced; challenging puzzles; multiple navigation modes</b>
■ Cons	<b>Puzzles are occasionally frustrating; Mac players can use only the more expensive Limited Edition</b>
■ RRP	\$90
■ Publisher	Ubisoft
■ Distributor	Try and Byte 02 9906 5227; PICA Australia 03 9388 9588
■ Reviewer	Peter Cohen
■ Hot links	<a href="http://mystworlds.ubi.com">mystworlds.ubi.com</a>

## Myst V

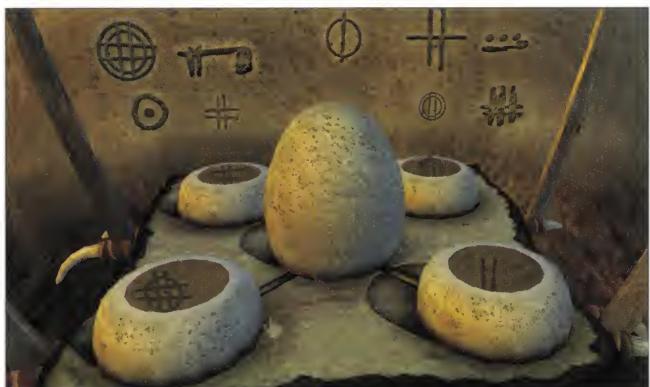
*The end of an era*

**A**FTER more than a decade, the Myst series – hugely popular adventure games with rich pre-rendered graphics, detailed stories worthy of a novel, brain-twisting puzzles, and non-violent game play – is finally complete, with the release of Myst V: End of Ages.

Like other Myst games, Myst V draws you into a mystical, magical world. The storyline continues from previous editions; you must help restore the empire of the D'ni, a civilisation of people who met with catastrophe as a result of Atrus's family.

Of course, solving puzzles is what Myst V is all about. As in past games, many of the puzzles involve moving levers or other appa-

**The last of its kind.** Myst V, the final instalment of the hugely popular Myst series, offers new puzzles to solve, new worlds to explore, and plenty of beautiful graphics.



ratutes to see how they affect something much larger than you. This game introduces slates, stone tablets that can be used to communicate with the mysterious and elusive creatures you'll meet throughout the game. To use the slates, you draw primitive symbols you find on your adventures and then lay the tablets out in plain sight so the creatures can see what you've written. If you've drawn the symbols correctly, the creatures will carry out your orders.

Whereas previous versions of Myst let you interact with live actors who were composited into 3D environments – a sometimes disjointed affair – Myst V maps the actors' faces onto 3D characters. The net effect is uncanny – the characters aren't entirely lifelike but are much better integrated into the game.

You'll be amazed at how good this game looks. Each world is rich with details, including intricate tapestries and rugs, artfully crafted cornices, striated rocks, and lush vegetation. The worlds are filled with animations of swarms of bugs, flying birds, crawling creatures, and lapping waves.

The system-requirement recommendations are a 1.6GHz G4 or faster, at least a 4x DVD-ROM drive, and OS X 10.3.9 or later.

The CD-based Standard Edition ships for PC only, while the Limited Edition DVD version works on both Macs and PCs. So Mac users must purchase the more expensive version. The Limited Edition version of the game features a making-of video, a soundtrack, a collector's art piece, and the official strategy guide – a handy addition for the mere mortals among us who may get stuck trying to unravel some of Myst V's secrets.

**The bottom line.** Myst's final chapter is a beautiful, challenging, and fitting close for this historic series. ■

■ Type	Brother QL-550	Dymo LabelWriter 400 Turbo	Seiko Smart Label Printer 430
■ Rating	4 1/2	4	4 1/2
■ Pros	Built-in cutter; built-in power supply	Easiest label changing	Support for OS X and Entourage address books
■ Cons	Bigger than the other two	No separate on/off switch	Fiddly label changing; price
■ OS X	USB 2.0	USB 2.0	USB 2.0; serial
■ SRP	\$249	\$249	\$599
■ Manufacturer	Brother	Dymo	Seiko Instruments
■ Distributor	Brother International Australia 02 9887 4344	Dymo Corporation 1800 633868	Smart Products 1300 788 081
■ Reviewer	Ian Yates		
■ Hot links	<a href="http://www.brother.com.au">www.brother.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.dymo.com.au">www.dymo.com.au</a>	<a href="http://www.smartproducts.com.au">www.smartproducts.com.au</a>

## AMW lab: label printers

*Mini printers for specialised tasks*

**A**T some point or other everyone has tried to use their Macintosh to produce labels. The experience can be highly variable, from "no problem" all the way to "printer repair required". The latter usually happens when you grab a sheet of partly-used labels and feed it into your laser or inkjet one last time. The partly-populated sheet then self-peels one or more labels around the rubber rollers in the bowels of your printer, which coincides with someone nearby saying "why did you have to use the computer just for one label?"

For most of us the question is rhetorical. We use the Mac to make a label because we can, fully convinced that the last time we did this – followed by total dismantling of the printer – was just a



one-off glitch that is unlikely ever to happen again. For some of us, printing labels on a regular basis is part of life so we stop trying to feed sheets of labels into lasers and buy a dedicated label printer.

**The contenders.** AMW lab was able to find three brands on sale locally: Brother, Dymo and Seiko. There are myriad models available from these three vendors, including self-powered portable numbers, which is where Dymo began its labelling history. For this review we looked at three dedicated labellers designed to sit alongside your Mac and produce labels on demand in an ordinary office or warehouse scenario: the Brother QL-550, the Dymo LabelWriter 400 Turbo and the Seiko Smart Label Printer 430. The Brother is larger than the other two, due to its internal power supply – both the Seiko and the Dymo use external in-line power bricks which make the print unit smaller.

All three of these units use special heat-sensitive labels which come on rolls in various sizes suitable for everything from price-tags in a jewellery shop up to shipping labels for pallets of produce. The printing process applies a very intense heat to the label to produce the image, so you needn't worry about the labels becoming illegible in ordinary use. AMW lab left some labels in the direct sun for several hours without any obvious degradation. You can also choose between "removable" and "permanent" labels, as well as your choice of various paper-colours or clear plastic. Although you have to buy the special heat-sensitive labels, you don't have to buy ink, toner or ribbons.

Although each vendor makes different sized-labels, the Brother QL-550 also comes with a built-in cutter. This feature lets you



load the printer up with a "tape" which is label-printer speak for a label that runs the entire length of the roll. You then decide how much label you need for your project and the printer snips them off as they are printed. If you regularly need to use several different-sized labels this feature would be very handy. If you mostly use the same few label sizes repeatedly, then pre-cut labels are a bit easier to handle since they don't end up as individual pieces until you decide to separate them.

**What to print.** Each printer also comes with dedicated labelling software which makes it easy to lay out your label and print off what you need without fiddling with settings in your word processor. Each labelling program included a very sensible "shrink to fit" function, which makes it easy to fill the whole label with whatever you are trying to say. They each come with a built-in database so that you can keep names and addresses handy.

All three allowed for the import of existing lists of data that you might want to make into a label, but the Dymo version let you switch to using the Mac OS X Address Book while the Seiko version went one step further and allowed you to switch in the



Entourage address book as well. Being able to use various OS X address books means that you don't have to duplicate perfectly good databases, and end up wondering which one is current.

All three programs present an initial blank label using the last label-size you specified, and all you need then do is type in the details or click on the chosen record from one of the available address books. You can alter typefaces and text size and include graphics, images, barcodes and logos on your labels with a few clicks of the mouse. Of course the resulting label will be black and white, with not many shades of grey, so line-art works best (a bit of deft Photoshopping can convert most images to high-contrast line art suitable for label printers).

**Australian Macworld's buying advice.** If you need to change label types often, the Dymo is the easiest to load, and doesn't require you to remember what goes where because there is a diagram of the loading process inside the loading bay. The Seiko software's easy switching between address books is tempting. However, unless size really matters, our pick is the Brother with its nifty built-in label cutter.

## The Perfect Partners for Your Mac



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■ Type	Utility
■ Rating	1/2
■ Pros	Unique data-spanning capabilities; convenient, customisable disc creation; includes Popcorn DVD-copying software; includes DivX Pro 6 codec; includes other useful applications
■ Cons	Slow to encode DivX files
■ OS X	10.3.9 or later
■ RRP	\$170
■ Publisher	Roxio
■ Reviewer	Jonathan Seff
■ Hot links	<a href="http://www.roxio.com">www.roxio.com</a>

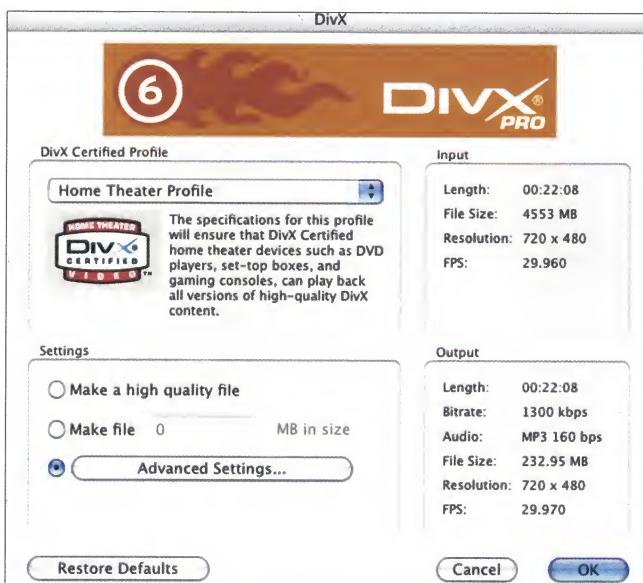
## Toast 7 Titanium

*Impressive new data, audio, and video capabilities*

WHEN Sonic Solutions – a digital media software company that specialised in the PC market – purchased Roxio in 2004, many users feared it would mean the end of Roxio's popular Toast software for the Mac. Fear not. Toast (and the Roxio brand) have survived, and with Toast 7 Titanium, Roxio has created an even better application with a sharper contrast between it and the built-in CD- and DVD-burning capabilities of OS X and Apple's iLife apps. Toast 7.0.1 is ideal for anyone who wants more control over burning data discs, audio CDs, and DVD-video discs in one convenient, full-featured package.

**Data.** The heart of any good burning program is good data backup. Toast has long excelled in this area, but Toast 7's new Data Spanning feature is an outstanding addition. Data spanning

**Long DIVision.** Toast's built-in DivX-encoding feature lets you create high-quality movies at small file sizes. You can even take projects from iMovie HD or Final Cut Pro HD and convert them to HD DivX CDs or DVDs — this is currently the only affordable way to watch burned HD content on a standard television.



solves the problem of trying to back up files, folders, or applications that are too big to fit on a single piece of optical media (CD or DVD) by divvying up items among as many discs as necessary. It chops individual files that are too big (large disc images or DV files, for example) into multiple pieces, and you can use the small (1MB) Roxio Restore application included on every disc of the series you burn to reassemble such files, copy self-contained files, or restore an entire disc series to your hard drive. The Restore app is very intuitive — it lets you drag and drop or double-click files to restore them — and it even includes a search feature so you can find a single file out of thousands across multiple DVDs. Note that spanning works only with Mac Only-formatted discs, not Roxio's cross-platform Mac & PC format.

Toast 7 also adds the ability to create hybrid discs with content specific to each operating system — simple checkboxes determine what files or folders will be visible on each platform.

**Video.** Toast 7 includes the functionality of Roxio's 1.0, software that can compress a costly dual-layer DVD movie for backup on a standard blank DVD (for legal reasons, you have to decrypt the DVD yourself before Toast can compress it). On a dual-2.3GHz Power Mac G5, it took 16 minutes and 20 seconds for Toast 7 to compress a 6.75GB movie. The 28 percent reduction in file size produced an excellent-looking DVD with no visible compression artefacts. Toast underestimated the time it would take to burn the DVD by more than a minute and a half, though, mostly because fast burners write data at different speeds on different parts of the disc — not a major fault, but it can be confusing at times.

For creating DVDs from scratch, Toast 7 adds ten different menu styles, a new MPEG-2 encoder, and more control over video compression settings and Dolby Digital data rates. And with the inclusion of the DivX Pro 6 codec, you can now encode movies to DivX format (Standard or High Definition) to watch on a computer or compatible set-top DVD player. Encoding is slow — it took 36 minutes to encode a 22-minute DV file to DivX format on a dual-2.3GHz Power Mac G5 — but the quality was quite good considering that the file size was reduced by 95 percent. (Toast did, however, leave annoying log files at the root of my hard drive.)

**Audio.** Toast 7's native support for open-source Ogg Vorbis and lossless FLAC (Free Lossless Audio Codec) files means you no longer need to convert such files to another format before burning. In my tests, burning a live concert in FLAC format worked perfectly, and the resulting discs contained music that flowed flawlessly from song to song. Roxio also has improved the Music DVD feature, which now lets you create a DVD disc with up to 50 hours of music that will play on most recently manufactured DVD players. This new version allows you to burn more music on one DVD, and gives you the same menus as DVD video discs, shuffle play, and more.

**Australian Macworld's buying advice.** If OS X's built-in burning abilities aren't enough for you, you won't find a better burning application than Toast 7.0.1. For owners of previous versions, I recommend the upgrade for its data-spanning, inclusion of Popcorn, and its DVD and DivX-burning capabilities. ↗

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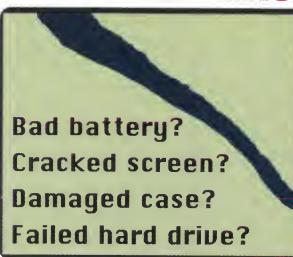
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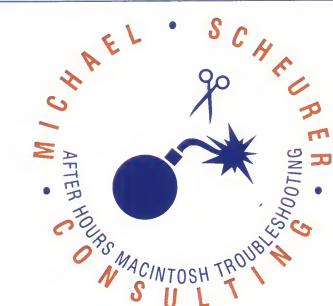
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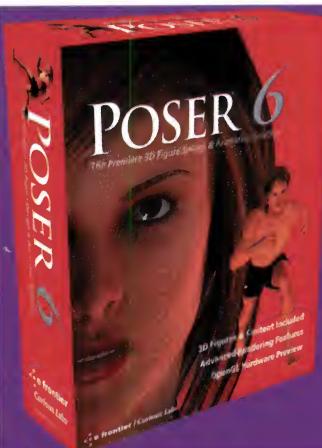
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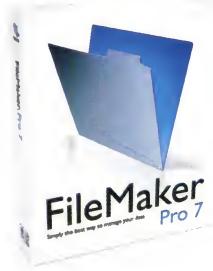
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By Alex Rieneck.

Something to chew on.

## You can't go back

TS funny the things you can read in readme files of programs on your hard drive if you are at a loose end. I was just browsing though the readme of iPhoto Buddy and found these deeply amusing words. In red:

**WARNING: Never alter the contents of an iPhoto Library directly with the Finder. Doing so can corrupt your Library and potentially cause the loss of your photos!**

I can attest to the truth in these words. With my blood. You see, it was only a few short weeks ago that, in preference to actually doing productive work, I decided to organise my iPhoto libraries, so that they — I can remember it well — "looked neat." It was something to do with the idea that if they were all in the one place, and sensibly labelled, they would be easier to back up. You can see the end of this story already can't you? Yep. With a criminal excess of competence, a Logitech mouse and a series of about three ill-advised clicks, I sent my main photo library to the bad place.

It's funny. By nature I am a deeply foul-mouthed character. I turn the air blue around me on subjects ranging from the weather, to my appreciation of well-made toast. However, when I realised that I had just burnt my main photo library to the ground and poured salt into the crater, the best I could manage was a sort of strangled squeak.

It was simple enough. It pains me to type it now, and it pains me more to know that any rude words I type in the next couple of sentences will just get removed by my hard-working editor, but the backups, well, lets just say that they were in a sad state of disarray. It's easy when you are an elected official and your actions kill a whole bunch of your countrymen. You just resign, and after a while you write a book. Sadly, I have to take the rap for the backups and I couldn't resign. Because nobody actually died I only get to write a column. Without interesting adjectives.

I'm joking a lot here, but suddenly losing eight hundred and fifty images was a really bad thing, and knowing that it was my own fault made the pain even worse. Things then went scatty. I downloaded several file recovery programs. All of them were shareware. All of them went to huge lengths to disguise this fact before download and each time I downloaded and extracted, I was writing over the top of my lost images. I got angrier. Eventually I paid about a hundred bucks to register the program with the web site that offended me the least. FileSalvage took hours and hours, clicking away over my hard drive.



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 Recovery and management software

I spent the time wondering whether the thunderclouds over my head would actually rain on me and if they would rain blood.

FileSalvage recovered fifteen thousand images. Just shy of two gigs worth. These images are comprised of thousands of things from the internet cache, tons of abandoned porn, things I had taken and actually deleted on purpose — I told you I was tidying up, didn't

I? — and the images from iPhoto. And their thumbnails. So, interspersed evenly throughout the fifteen thousand images there were those 850 lost images. With 850 thumbnails that look just the same. You see, by some evil trickery the recovered files could arbitrarily vary in size. A 100 by 100 pixel thumbnail could be three megabytes. A full size image could easily be twenty-five megabytes or two.

Absolute best of all? All these images were randomised, and numbered sequentially from one to fourteen thousand nine hundred and eighty eight.

Over a month later, I am still sorting through the mess. In that time my moods have passed through an entire spectrum ranging from incandescent anger to utter boredom to deepest blackest nihilism. It's been educational.

I have seen pictures which I lost, and loved, and been unmoved by them. I have seen happy snaps, their bottom half lost forever, which have moved me to tears. I have seen moments which I had forgotten and which were enshrined forever by a photo, and I have seen other moments to which no photo could ever do justice. In short, I have spent a month trolling through the past, and at long last come to the completely unpleasant conclusion that the past is the past, and that the past cannot be owned, by images, or by memories, or by recovery software and most definitely not by iPhoto. I eventually decided that people whose houses burn down on top of their priceless photo albums are at least spared the craven, sweaty-palmed drudgery of using computer recovery software on the ashes.

Are you in the mood for advice? Back it up now. Tonight. Don't think that it will wait till whenever. Take the time now. If possible, print everything. Onto paper. Failing that, prepare yourself for a learning experience. At about a hundred bucks, they're cheap. ↗

**Alex Rieneck has been a technology commentator since the days of the bone abacus.**

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